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THE

POETRY

OF

MILTON'S PROSE;

SELECTED

FROM HIS VARIOUS WRITINGS;

WITH

NOTES,

69578

AND AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

He was not like those stars which only shine,
When to pale mariners they storms portend:
He had his calmer influence, and his mien
Did love and majesty together blend.

DRYDEN.

LONDON:

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ADVERTISEMENT.

ALTHOUGH in the Introduction the Editor has endeavoured to anticipate the curiosity of the reader, regarding the writings and opinions of our great national poet, he is anxious to state that, in making the following selections, his object has been to form a suitable, appropriate accompaniment to Milton's Poetical Works—extracting only such passages as none of the various classes of his admirers "would willingly let die." The collection might easily have been extended to a much greater length, but not, perhaps, without detracting from the general character and interest of the work. When Lord Chesterfield was once presented with a small volume, entitled—"The Beauties of Shakspeare,"—he is said to have asked, "Where are the other seven volumes?" This elegant, em-

phatic compliment could not be applied to the Prose compositions of Milton. They were written chiefly in stormy times, and for temporary purposes; and partake of the heat and violence inseparable from party contests. But as the animosities or prejudices of men ought to die with the circumstances that produce them, so the errors or intemperance of an author ought not to blind us to his sincerity, patriotism, or eloquence. Deducting from the Prose Works of Milton all that may justly be urged against them—all that the most bitter of his enemies, or the most fastidious of his critics, have propagated—we shall still see, even in his harsh, neglected Treatises, what Johnson saw in *Comus*, "the dawn or twilight of *Paradise Lost*."

C.

Huntingdon, January 29, 1827.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

To the learned and studious admirers of Milton, the Writings from which the present volume is compiled are sufficiently familiar: but perhaps it may be said, without exaggeration, that to thousands of those who hang with delight over the inspirations of his Muse, those severer transcripts of his mind are as *a fountain shut and a book sealed up.* The union of polemics with poetry has rarely, if ever, been fortunate to the latter; but so essentially imaginative was the genius of Milton, that even on the most barren, forbidding subjects—when expounding the heresies of Rome, or vituperating the Prelates—he cannot restrain the divine impulse within him, but kindles up into poetry of

the highest order, and "showers barbaric pearl and gold" among the dusty legends of the Fathers, and the gloomy speculations of Puritanism. To collect and arrange these scattered gems, and present them to the public in a more commodious, though equally perishable casket, than any in which they have hitherto appeared, has been the pleasing task of the Editor. Nothing has been admitted that could possibly derogate from the purity of Milton's fame: nothing but what must serve to "polish and brighten the armoury of truth;" and to awaken or confirm sentiments of piety and virtue: and from no other author in the English language, Shakspeare alone excepted, could so many *thoughts that breathe and words that burn* be extracted. To illustrate the text, we have occasionally compared the theologian and politician with the poet, thus making the author turn commentator to himself; and if, with these citations and the other Notes, we may be thought to have interrupted and overlaid the subject-matter, we trust the

reader will extend his indulgence to an error which may be easily obviated, by first reading the text without attending to the marginal references, and which has enabled us to bring into one view so many exquisite *centos* of poetry and prose.

As some apology for the public neglect of these noble compositions, it may be remarked, that the general style of Milton's Prose Works is confessedly foreign and unnatural, and though it has an air of great stateliness and originality, appears, at first sight, to general readers, dry and repulsive. The severe taste of the author was formed upon the classic models of antiquity; and hence he studiously avoided that racy idiomatic play and vigour characteristic of a true indigenous English style.* His opi-

* Yet Milton does not seem to have been aware of the peculiarities of his diction. In the dedication to his *Judgment of Martin Bucer*, he says, "I was told that the style, with what it ails to be so soon distinguishable I cannot tell, was known by most men." As his course of reading, in his younger years, lay chiefly among the ancients, he probably insensibly copied their manner and

nions, too, are far from being popular—his adversaries, whom he so bitterly attacks, have sunk into oblivion—and the arguments he was desirous of enforcing or confuting have long since ceased to interest the public. When the destinies of the nation were supposed to depend upon the interpretation of certain passages in Scripture, and grave senators could rise in Parliament to "clear" the Epistles of Timothy and Titus—when the crosier staff and the Geneva cap were alternately stronger than the sceptre—we need scarcely wonder that polemical zeal and animosity ran high, or that the most gifted genius of the age was tempted to enter the spiritual arena. Milton was also, in some measure, predisposed, from other causes, to embark in the nation's quarrel. He had been educated under a strict Presbyterian tutor, Thomas Young, one of the authors

adopted their Roman cast of expression. His unusually long periods may also, as has been justly remarked, be considered as so many distinct visions of his imagination or understanding.

of *Smectymnuus*, and had certainly suffered some indignities at College, not amounting, in our opinion, to corporeal punishment, as has been frequently alleged, but sufficient to wound and irritate his nice and haughty spirit. His natural temper was grave, even to austerity; and, with that pride and sensitiveness which often accompany great intellect, he was inordinately jealous of all authority and restraint.

The wonderful changes and disasters in the State, succeeding each other so rapidly, and considered by the Puritans, with whom Milton first allied himself, as so many manifestations of Divine Providence in their favour, were eminently calculated to quicken the religious enthusiasm that then prevailed, and to exalt and sublime the imaginations of its votaries. Contending for so dear a prize as liberty of conscience, and believing that they were specially appointed to shake and overturn the old corruptions of the kingdom, the Puritans were guided by no considerations of prudence, policy, or forbearance.

They trampled upon all earthly dignities and distinctions—so long, at least, as these were in the possession of their adversaries—and broke away from the ordinary restraints of law and subordination, as Samson did from the green withes with which the Philistines sought to bind him. The restless, insatiate temper of the party, and a sense of their growing importance in the nation, urged them on to redoubled exertions, while the voices of their self-expatriated countrymen seemed to call on them from "the howling wildernesses" of America,* to draw the sword and throw away the scabbard.

Unfortunately for the King and for the nation, in proportion as this factious spirit of obstinate resistance gained strength in Parliament, the measures of the Court ran into the opposite extreme of needless, vexatious oppression. The amiable manners, accomplished taste, and princely deportment of Charles, give him, in the eyes of posterity,

* Cromwell's Speech at the dissolution of the Parliament in 1654.

a striking advantage over his assailants; but it is equally obvious, that he either inherited from his father, or formed for himself, notions of the kingly prerogative, utterly at variance with the principles of a mixed monarchy and free constitution. A little conciliation on the part of the King and his advisers, and principally of Laud—a slight conformity to the spirit of the times—would have kept many a good subject and sound churchman from joining the Puritans; but when men were fined, mutilated, and imprisoned, for simply adhering to opinions which they believed to be right, and for refusing to comply with forms which the Government itself declared to be unimportant—when "Indifferency," as Milton terms it, "became a jolly persecutor," not only were the sufferers (weak, wrong-headed, but conscientious persons) made sworn enemies to the Government, but men of rank and influence espoused their cause, and a general feeling of pity and indignation was awakened throughout the kingdom.. Hence, Episco-

pacy was attacked, not as a religion, but as a tyranny. The Church of England, so admirably suited in its dignity and simplicity to the genius of the nation, and its Prelates, many of whom were men of unquestioned learning and virtue, became the mark of obloquy and reproach, and were desecrated and defamed with a warmth and virulence, happily unexampled since, and rare even in the annals of religious controversy.*

* A characteristic specimen of the trifling but bitter contentions which then predominated is given in one of the Puritanical tracts of the day:—"D. Pearce, the now Bishop of Bath and Wells, *by name*, enjoined the churchwardens of Batcombe, *in Mr. Barnard's parish*, in Somersetshire, under pain of excommunication, to expunge this Scripture, anciently painted on their church-wall, quite out of the Church,—'*If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord,*' &c. [Isaiah, lviii, 13] styling it a Jewish place of Scripture, not fit to stand or be suffered in the Church: which Scripture the churchwardens refusing to blot out, the Bishop, like an heroical

Upon these public grounds, joined to the private causes already assigned, must we account for the fierce, irrepressible hatred and indignation which, in almost every page of Milton's theological treatises, blaze up against the doctrine and discipline of the Church in whose lap he was nursed, and whose "service high, with anthems clear," he had in his youth delighted to celebrate.

The poet was abroad when the noise of the political volcano that was raging in England first reached his ears. He had enjoyed the favour and friendship of the "choicest Italian wits," and visited the famous Galileo, "then grown old, a prisoner in the Inquisition." He also purposed visiting Sicily and Greece, but "esteeming it an unworthy thing to be diverting himself abroad when his countrymen were contending at home for their liberty," he relinquished his intention, and hastened to the English

Prelate, made his chaplain ride thither in person, with a plasterer, to see it wiped out!"—*The Unbishoping of Timothy and Titus:* "in the yeare 1636."

metropolis. Like the prophet Jeremiah, "the word was in his heart as a burning fire shut up in his bones; he was weary with forbearing and could not stay:" the sentiments he had with difficulty suppressed in the Papal dominions, burst forth with uncontrollable fury in the free air of England. On the part which Milton took in the ensuing troubles—that perilous struggle which shook the kingdom to its centre—reft the throne of its legitimate monarch—overturned the constitution, and ended in a military despotism—it would be unnecessary here to dilate, for who is ignorant of the story of Milton's life? That he acted conscientiously and consistently none can deny: he stood forward the champion and protector of *freedom of thought*, by whomsoever it was assailed, Prelate or Presbyterian. But Milton was born for even higher things than these; and we may be permitted to regret, in his own beautiful language, "that he left a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a

troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of Truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies."

In his own day and generation, the name of Milton stood high in the world; and, though a century and a half have since intervened, it has not yet "gathered all its fame." He wrote for posterity, and he has obtained, and is still obtaining, its full and favourable award. Time, which has stripped so many of his compatriots of their fugitive renown, has only added to his distinction, and each successive generation of his countrymen has spontaneously crowned his genius with fresh honours, as Spring annually clothes the forest with new leaves and verdure. It may yet "ask ages more" to produce another *Paradise Lost*, but the means by which its author fostered his talents and laboured for immortality, ought never to be forgotten by those who seek to distinguish themselves on the theatre of public fame. When meditating some great work, "that

after-times should not willingly let die," he indulges in no vain or exaggerated estimate of his own powers, nor indolently reposes on the hope of sudden impulses of inspiration, but calmly and piously acknowledges that true fame "is only to be obtained by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this," he continues, "must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, and insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own peril and cost, I refuse not to sustain the expectation."

From this glowing passage, it would appear that Milton, like Bacon, did

> On the very border stand
> Of the blest promis'd land.*

That he was conscious of his own trans-

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* Cowley.—Ode to the Royal Society

cendant genius—a species of knowledge, indeed, from which no great author, with the exception, perhaps, of Shakspeare, was ever exempt—is sufficiently obvious from various passages of his works; but he could not have anticipated, even in his most sanguine and exultant moments, "with all his garlands and singing robes about him," the universal homage that would be paid to his memory. Had this superhuman prescience been afforded the poet, as the archangel Michael revealed to Adam the splendour of his ultimate destiny, we should not have heard him wishing that he were "equalled in renown" with

> Blind Thamyris, and blind Mæonides,
> And Tiresias, and Phineus, prophets old;

nor would he have regretted, even in the wreck of his fortunes, that he had

> ——————Fallen on evil days;
> On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
> In darkness, and with danger compass'd round,
> And solitude!

Dr. Johnson, who, as will be readily ac-

knowledged, had but little community of feeling on political subjects with Milton, has censured him strongly for indulging in this touching, pathetic appeal; and, without assenting implicitly to all the dogmas and prejudices of our great moralist, on the subject of Milton's character and genius, his criticism in this instance appears to us to be just and well-founded. In his various controversies, Milton himself had not scrupled, with the license of the times, to speak evil of his contemporaries. It is true, he was sometimes grossly attacked, but whether opposing or defending—throwing down the gauntlet or accepting the challenge—his language is bitter and acrimonious in the extreme. His treatment of Hall, for simply and "humbly" writing in favour of Episcopacy, is almost unprecedented in the lists of literary warfare. He had also done much to provoke enmity. He had (however conscientiously) vilified the institutions of his country, accumulated every epithet of reproach upon the Government, and defended

and applauded the murder of his sovereign. On the very eve of the Restoration, he had sounded the tocsin of Republicanism, and warned the nation of the danger of re-admitting "kingship." When royalty again obtained the ascendant, he could hardly expect to be continued in favour. The defender of the regicides was necessarily marked and proscribed; yet, notwithstanding his recent and powerful opposition to monarchy, he was included in the general amnesty: he was not incapacitated from future service in the State, nor *decimated* of his property, as Oliver and the Long Parliament had done with the more conspicuous of the Cavaliers:* his political heresies were overlooked, in consideration of his age, virtue, and genius, and the severity of justice was tempered with magnanimity. Surely, then, of all those who had shed abroad the bitter waters of

* The father of Milton's first wife, for his attachment to the Royal Party, was fined £576. 12s. 3d. and branded as a delinquent. His house had before been seized by the soldiers.

strife and hatred—who saw and sought to avert the Restoration—Milton had the least reason to deplore his fate, or to complain of "evil tongues." His other insinuation, "evil days," is equally inapplicable: nothing but the most intolerant Republicanism could have led Milton to consider those days evil which witnessed the downfal of an unpopular, fanatical oligarchy—the extinction of raving sects and plotting parties—and the restoration of the rightful sovereign, amidst the acclamations of his people.

But the lines to which we have alluded are too full of pathos, and simple, mournful dignity, to be thus *politically* criticised. In Milton's imagination, the days were indeed evil: he was fast declining into the vale of years—his long-cherished hopes were "scattered to the four winds"—the gods of his idolatry dashed on the floor of the sanctuary; he had none to meet his enemies in the gate; and amidst old age, blindness, and comparative neglect—haunted by the fear of poverty and the dread of assassination—

who can wonder that he sometimes mingled a tone of querulous complaint and reproach with the numbers that his "celestial patroness"

Brought nightly to his ear?

In his prime of life, it would have been impossible for Milton, with his ardent, enthusiastic temperament, to have remained a passive spectator of the events of his times; but it has always, we must confess, appeared to us a matter of great regret and surprise that he should have linked himself to the chariot-wheels of Cromwell, and after denouncing the sovereign authority of the State as arbitrary and impolitic, succumb to a usurpation infinitely more tyrannical and humbling to the nation. If Charles dispensed with the use of Parliaments, Oliver packed and purged them at his pleasure—assembled or dismissed them with the simple veto of his own individual power—a power, too, assumed over men who had been the founders of his fortune, whose authority he indeed denied and abjured, but without

which he could not justify one drop of the blood he had spilt. If Milton "exhausted the powers of language" in vituperating the Royalists, why was he *mute* when his countrymen were tried and condemned by their accusers, without a jury—when the cruel edicts against the Clergy were passed—when his brother Republicans were silenced or macerated in prisons—and when the nation was divided into military districts, and brought under the galling yoke of a mercenary soldiery? Had he stood aloof, like Algernon Sidney, when Cromwell threw off the mask, and aimed at all but the *name* of king, we might still have admired the sincere unbending patriot and Republican: the lustre of his political integrity would have been undimmed by the shades of factious subserviency; and we should not now be sometimes tempted to forget the eloquent, indignant expounder of his country's wrongs—the ardent votary of liberty—in the learned, compliant secretary of the Parliament and the Protector.

That the poet's republicanism was "scotched, not killed," in the alembic of the Protectorate, is obvious from his tracts written after Cromwell's death;* but if his principles

* His *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth*, &c. One of Milton's republican friends, a Mr. Wall, writing to him, says, "I confess I have, even in my privacy in the country, oft had thoughts of you, and that with much respect for your friendship to truth in your early years and bad times. But I was uncertain whether your relation to the Court (though I think a Commonwealth was more friendly to you than a Court) had not clouded your former light; but your last book resolved that doubt." *Birch's Life*, p. xliii. The book alluded to is Milton's *Treatise of the Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases*, published on the temporary return of the Long Parliament, in 1659. Mr. Wall forgot that the spell which probably kept Milton silent was then dissolved: the Protector and his Court were no more. With all his disregard of "paper pellets," Oliver would scarcely have brooked to be bearded in his pride of place by the Latin secretary. After the death of Cromwell, Milton does not seem to have wished for another Protector: "men" he says, in his *Ready and Easy Way*, "have smarted so oft for committing all to one person." He therefore proposes that the sovereignty of the nation should reside in a General Council of the ablest men.

did not deter him from stooping to accept office under the usurper, his naturally high and haughty temper kept him from joining the servile herd of his court friends and parasites. We find him, it is true, addressing Oliver in the laboured language of panegyric, but he mingles advice with his applause, and betrays none of the supple arts of the time-server. When Andrew Marvel presented the Protector with a copy of the *Defensio Secunda*, sent by Milton, Oliver did not read the poet's letter, being then engaged in business, and afterwards barely "witnessed to Marvel all respect for the person" of Milton, and "satisfaction with his performance," so far at least as a cursory perusal enabled him to judge. It is more than probable that Cromwell, with his matchless powers of dissimulation, deceived even Milton. Admiring the Protector's tolerant principles in matters of religion, and cajoled by his prayers and protestations, the poet mistook the semblance of liberty for the substance, and having once bowed

his head to the yoke, and accepted of office, he could not either with safety or consistency recede. He might also act from the principle—a principle foreign to the character of his mind, but which he lays down in his posthumous treatise—"that it may be the part of prudence to obey the commands even of a tyrant, in lawful things, or more properly, to comply with the necessity of the times, for the sake of public peace, as well as of personal safety."*

The salary of Milton, as Secretary for Foreign Languages, appears from the order books of the Council of State, certain extracts from which have lately been published by Dr. Sumner and Mr. Todd,† to have been about £300 per annum, which, in 1655, was reduced to £150, when Philip Meadows and Andrew Marvel were admitted to be his coadjutors, and the increasing age and infirmities of the poet compelled him

* Treatise on Christian Doctrine, p. 704

† Preliminary Observations to Christian Doctrine, an Life prefixed to the last edition of Milton's Poetical Works.

to withdraw from the active duties of his office. He was also provided with lodgings in Whitehall at the public expense, concerning which we have the following curious copy of a warrant granted by the Council of State:

"These are to will and requite you, forthwith, upon sight hereof, to deliver unto Mr. John Milton, or to whom hee shall appoint, such hangings as shall bee sufficient for the furnishing of his lodgings in Whitehall. Given at Whitehall, 18° *Junii*, 1650.

"*To the Trustees and Contractors for the Sale of the late King's Goods.*"*

We would fain hope that Milton did not avail himself of this eleemosynary grant, or condescend to decorate the scene of his studies with the pilfered shreds of dismantled Royalty.

In reviewing the poetry of Milton, nothing now is left to an humble admirer but a feeble echo of former praises. We dare not presume to hazard criticism upon works which

* Dr. Sumner's Preliminary Observations to Treatise on Christian Doctrine, p. viii.

the unanimous consent of posterity has placed among the highest productions of human art, and which some of the most gifted intellects England ever produced have deemed it an honour and a privilege to analyse and illustrate. In contemplating PARADISE LOST—

> The sacred Poem that made
> Both heaven and earth copartners in its toil,
> And with lean abstinence, through many a year,
> Faded his brow,*

our admiration is converted into wonder and astonishment, when we consider that it was executed in darkness, solitude, and neglect —when we recal the sublimity of the poet's conceptions—his boundless imagination and inexhaustible learning—the majestic march and melody of his numbers—the indescribable grace, energy, and felicity of his language and imagery. Milton's mind never could have grown old: it had what Burke terms "a living salient spring of action," which only death could contract or shut up.

* Dante—Cary's translation.

The keenest disasters could not blunt the edge of his sensibility, nor "age, ache, penury, imprisonment," and blindness, quench the lustre of those glorious visions which filled his imagination with the forms, fruits, and flowers of Paradise. All that is interesting or beautiful in the moral and created world —that association could endear, or taste and genius consecrate—has been spread out on his pages, endued, like the Tree of Life in the Apocalypse, with never-failing bloom, efficacy, and sweetness —"embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." So perfect is the fascination of this wonderful work, that the most careless and unenlightened reader feels himself touched and elevated by the skill of the poet, as, in contemplating a gallery of paintings, the most uninitiated spectator singles out for his special delight and gratification some production of the old masters of Greece or Italy. The page of Milton has charms for every mind and mood.—The same hand which drew the sword of Michael,

and fashioned the spear and shield of Satan —that arrayed the hostile armies of heaven, and painted Sin, and Death, and Hell— dressed the nuptial bower of Eve, and adorned her with "lowliness majestic" and "perfect beauty,"

That would be wooed, and not unsought be won.

They who are awed and intimidated by the presence of the Most High, the dauntless front and lofty bearing of the rebellious spirits, and "all the dread magnificence of heaven," can repose with unalloyed delight on the primeval innocence and happiness of our first parents—their morning and evening orisons—their "rural work, among sweet dews and flowers"—their entertainment of the angel Raphael at the door of their "cool bower"—their walks, dreams, and colloquies, so like to earth, yet full of all we hope of heaven! And when at length the "baleful Tempter" proves victorious, and sin has entered the world, covering the fair face of creation with moral sterility and darkness, with what deep and

tender sympathy do we pursue the fallen fortunes of the erring but repentant pair—listen to their mutual sighs and upbraidings, and hear the "audible lament" of Eve on parting from her native Paradise!

> O flowers,
> That never will in other climate grow,
> My early visitation, and my last
> At even, which I bred up with tender hand,
> From the first opening bud, and gave ye names—
> Who now shall rear ye to the sun?

But here the light of revelation breaks in upon the unhappy mourners, tempering and assuaging their sorrows; and though doomed to "take their solitary way" through Eden, they are consoled with the assurance that they shall at last see "golden days," and behold

> New heavens, new earth, ages of endless date,
> Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love.

Next to *Paradise Lost*, every reader of taste and imagination must rank the MASQUE of COMUS—a poem, or rather drama, full of the genius of Milton, but softened and

subdued, as if just descended from the "empyrean," •

To plume her feathers, and let grow her wings.

Comus, however, is one of the poet's early productions, written after leaving the university, at his father's peaceful mansion, when Shakspeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher, were "the closet companions of these his solitudes," and before the spirit of religious zeal and discord had commanded him to "take the trumpet and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast." The exquisite harmony of style and numbers for which *Comus* is distinguished, every line and syllable seeming to move "to the Dorian mood of flutes and soft recorders," is said to resemble the sweet rhythm and cadence of the Italian language, of which Milton was a warm admirer, and perfect master. *Lycidas*, also, was formed according to the rules of Tuscan poetry, and its irregular versification and fanciful imagery speak plainly of its origin. But the "divine philosophy" of *Comus*, and the concluding lines of the Monody, speak

still more plainly of the great Christian poet of England. Milton knew how to avail himself of the music of the Italians to soften the ruggedness of our northern tongue, but he employs it only as an adjunct to sentiments

Breathing united force with fixed thought.'

Though eminently fair and handsome in his youth (the "lady of his college") Milton had no Beatrice or Laura to charm the early strains of his muse. He had imbibed a portion of that delicate, romantic gallantry predominant in the Italian poets; but what with Dante and Petrarch was an ardent, inextinguishable passion, with Milton was but a dream of fancy—a beautiful but cold and barren admiration of female loveliness and perfection. Hence his youth glided away amid his Academic bowers and studies, without any strong or permanent attachment; and in after years the robust intellectual character of his mind—his love of fame and of his country—must have led him

to look with pity and contempt upon those who could consign

"The noon of manhood to a myrtle shade.

His first marriage was a hasty, ill-assorted match: it ended in disappointment and disgust, and seems to have soured him towards all the sex. Yet the stream of his affections was choked and intercepted, rather than dried up. He has bewailed the loss of his second wife in one of his most elegant and pathetic Sonnets; and even in the winter of his days, so carefully had he nourished and husbanded up the pure and holier feelings of the heart, he enriched his sublime epic with images of tenderness and beauty, which possess all the glowing freshness and exuberance of youthful genius.

Dr. Johnson's criticism of LYCIDAS is wholly unworthy of his talents, and demonstrates, better than a thousand dissertations, that he was either sometimes wilfully blind, from prejudice, or that, to the charms of a certain class of imaginative poetry he was utterly insensible. The exquisite relish for

the pleasures of a town life, which predominated in the mind of Johnson, and his constitutional aversion to solitude, seem to have blunted his perception to the simple beauties of external nature, and to have rendered him distasteful of poetry which did not include some striking moral sentiment, or attract by the grandeur or melody of its numbers. His gigantic mind disdained an alliance with the gentler graces. He could comprehend and develop, with matchless skill and wisdom, the sublimities of *Paradise Lost;* but the myrtle and ivy of *Lycidas* shrunk from his touch, and eluded his grasp. With our great critic, the proper study of mankind was man.

> Violets, dim,
> But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
> Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
> That die unmarried ere they can behold
> Bright Phœbus in his strength,

carried with them no rapture or intoxication to his imagination—no dreams of hidden moral beauty, superior to the cold realities

of material life. "Surely," says the critic, "no man could have fancied that he read *Lycidas* with pleasure, had he not known its author." Let the readers of Milton answer to this individual appeal—but the best answer would be to print the poem with the criticism: the Doctor wisely refrains from giving quotations. "The form of the poem," he also remarks, "is that of a pastoral—easy, vulgar, *and therefore disgusting.*" This is what Partridge would have called a *non sequitur*, and reminds us of one of the many amusing entries in Pepys's Diary, where the worthy secretary, upon awakening one morning, discovers that there is *a mighty high wind*, upon which he adds, "Pray God that no great man be dead!" Johnson's conclusion flows as naturally from the premises as Pepys's high wind prognosticated death.

It would be "a wasteful and ridiculous excess" to advert here to the ALLEGRO and PENSEROSO of Milton, written as they are in the heart, and painted on the imagina-

tion of thousands; or to point out the severe and masculine dignity of Samson, stripped of his strength and glory, "shorn of his beams," yet bearing himself loftily in his most abject fortunes, and hurling scorn, and defiance, and destruction upon his unregenerate enslavers. In the following pathetic burst we seem to recognize the poet himself—the haughty scholar and politician—tamed by misfortune, and sinking under age and infirmity:

> All otherwise to me my thoughts portend
> That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,
> Nor th' other light of life continue long,
> But yield to double darkness nigh at hand:
> So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
> My hopes all flat, nature within me seems,
> In all her functions, weary of herself:
> My race of glory run, and race of shame,
> And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

PARADISE REGAINED is generally found to be one of the least attractive of Milton's Poetical Works, although it contains many grand and melancholy passages, and breathes throughout an air of pensive, solemn dig-

nity, and austere beauty, worthy of the poet and of the subject. The want of interest principally arises from the limited nature of the subject, the author having strictly adhered to the narrative of Scripture. There is also a comparative flatness in the dialogues, unrelieved by incident, and the diction is sometimes harsh and unmelodious: we miss the fire which irradiates his other productions, and the ornaments which so profusely and gracefully decorate them. Milton's religious opinions unquestionably interfered with the plan, and marred the execution of this poem. A believer in the full divinity of Christ would not have confined the scheme of redemption to one solitary incident in his life—the temptation in the wilderness. And here we are reminded of the necessity that we should say something of the creed of the poet, which, next to his poetry, has attracted the attention of all his readers and biographers.

"In his early days," says Toland, whose memoir, meagre as it is, contains the *germ*

of all the information we possess of Milton's private history, " he was a favourer of those protestants then opprobriously called by the name of Puritans. In his middle years he was best pleased with the Independents and Anabaptists, as allowing of more liberty than others, and coming nearest in his opinion to the primitive practice; but in the latter part of his life he was not a professed member of any particular sect among Christians; he frequented none of their assemblies, nor made use of their peculiar rites in his family. Whether this proceeded from a dislike of their uncharitable and endless disputes, and that love of dominion, or inclination to persecution, which, he said, was a piece of popery inseparable from all churches; or whether he thought one might be a good man without subscribing to any party, and that they had all in some things corrupted the institutions of Jesus Christ, I will by no means adventure to determine, for conjectures, on such occasions, are very uncertain; and I never met with any of

his acquaintance who could be positive in assigning the true reasons of his conduct."

The truth is, when Milton had once forsaken the church of his fathers, he had, like most men, some difficulty in choosing another capable of preserving the same hold on the affections. In all religious services, properly performed, the heart is fully as much concerned as the understanding, and so many powerful associations are connected with the form of worship, which has grown with our growth and strengthened with our strength, that it cannot, in mature life, be relinquished for another, even at the command of reason and conviction, without occasioning a chasm not easily filled up.

Milton's aversion to the established religion does not appear to have been confined to the order of church government alone. The prelates, indeed, he hated with a cordial hatred; bestowing upon them indiscriminately every epithet of reproach which a powerful, unbridled imagination could supply. But the Liturgy he attacks with equal

violence. Forgetting the feelings with which he had once participated in its ritual, and walked the "studious cloisters pale," he brands the devotional services of the King's Chapel with "vanity, superstition, and misdevotion," and asserts his belief, that "God is no more moved with a prayer elaborately penned, than men, truly charitable, are moved with the penned speech of a beggar." With what feelings, then, could he have composed the sublime invocation prefixed to *Paradise Lost*, and the numerous addresses to the Deity, no less pious than eloquent, which irradiate his prose productions?

The religion of the State he wished to see placed on a very humble footing. The Gospel was to be preached by itinerant divines, brought up at once "to a competence of learning and to an honest trade;" and who were to be supported by the *voluntary* contributions of their hearers, and their own manual labour. "Thus taught, once for all," says our author, "and thus now and then visited and confirmed, in the most

destitute and poorest parts of the land, under the government of their own elders, performing all ministerial offices among them, they may be trusted to meet and edify one another, whether in church or chapel, or to save them the trudging of many miles thither, nearer home, though in a house or barn: for, notwithstanding the gaudy superstition of some, devoted still ignorantly to temples, we may be well assured that he who disdained not to be laid in a manger, disdains not to be preached in a barn."* The utmost enemy to Christianity could scarcely wish to see the Church reduced to a lowlier plight.

Milton, like Cromwell, did not long worship after what Dugdale calls "the Geneva cut and pattern." Oliver soon discovered that the Puritans would not go along with him in beheading the King, and destroying the remaining fragments of monarchy; and the poet became sensible

That new Presbyter was but old Priest writ large.

* "Considerations touching the likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church."

Accordingly they both forsook the Presbyterians, one to attack them with the pen and the other with the sword. It is also worthy of remark, that though all public connections were at that time ostensibly formed on religious grounds, Milton's connection with the Presbyterians, who formed the main strength of the Parliament, was in all probability owing more to a union of political views and sentiments, than to a similarity of religious belief; and consequently he might think himself justified in abandoning the party when he saw its leaders abandon the line of conduct which had originally brought them together. But Milton had another, and perhaps still stronger, ground of dislike to the Presbyterian clergy: on the appearance of his *Treatise on Divorce*, they not only caused him to be summoned before the Parliament, from which, however, he was speedily and honourably dismissed, but one of them, in preaching before the same assembly, characterized the Treatise as a "wicked book, which deserved to be burnt." To so sturdy a champion of free-

dom of speech and liberty of conscience, this must have appeared an inexpiable offence.

The poet's alleged disuse of public worship is a reproach which, as has been remarked by Dr. Symmons, and others, ought to be received with caution, not only as his blindness and other infirmities might be his excuse, but as the charge was first produced by Toland, a confirmed deist, who might think the circumstance an honour rather than a blemish to the character of the poet, and consequently believe it without sufficient investigation. In his *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, Milton admits that it is the duty of believers to join themselves, *if possible*, to a Church duly constituted; "but such," he adds, "as cannot do this conveniently, or with full satisfaction of conscience, are not to be considered as excluded from the blessing bestowed by God upon the Churches."* This, it must

* Christian Doctrine, p. 458.

be confessed, seems to favour the statement of Toland, and to confirm a sagacious remark made by Warton, that Milton contended for that sort of individual religion by which every man is to be his own priest. But if Milton did indeed absent himself, in his latter days, from all public worship, deeply as we may lament the circumstance, his silent, solitary adoration of the

> Spirit that dost prefer,
> Before all temples, the upright heart and pure,

was worthy a thousand professions of sanctity unaccompanied by internal devotion. His daily employments, we are told, were always ushered in by devout meditation, and study of the Scriptures; and his whole writings breathe a fervent spirit of piety, and evince his intense study of the sacred volume, and the love and reverence he bore towards the Christian revelation. "He ever expressed," says Toland, "the profoundest reverence to the Deity, as well in deeds as in words; and would say to his friends, that the divine properties of goodness, justice,

and mercy, were the adequate rule of human actions, nor less the object of imitation for private advantages, than of admiration or respect for their own excellence and perfection."

In points of faith and doctrine, the opinions of Milton, at different periods of his life, underwent a material change. In his youth he had sung the Trinal Unity, apostrophized the Tri-personal Godhead, and denounced the Arian heresy: but in advanced years he rejected this belief, and indirectly stigmatized the terms of Trinity, Tri-unity, &c. as "scholastic notions."* The following lines, in *Paradise Regained*, had long proved a stumbling-block to his commentators:

> His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
> And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
> That all the angels and ethereal powers,
> They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
> From what consummate virtue I have chose
> This perfect man, by merit called my Son,
> To earn salvation for the sons of men.

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* See the article on Toleration in this volume.

But at length the discovery and publication of his long-lost *Treatise on Christian Doctrine* solved the mystery, and proved that on the doctrine of the Trinity, Milton's opinions ultimately approximated to Arianism; ascribing to the Son as high a share of divinity as was compatible with the denial of his self-existence and eternal generation, but not admitting his co-equality and co-essentiality with the Father. The Spirit he held to be far inferior to the Son. It is chiefly on the doctrine of the eternal filiation that Milton is at variance with the generality of Christians. The atonement he esteemed to be full and satisfactory: not only was man redeemed, but a real price, "life for life," was paid for his redemption.*

On the dubious, interminable question of predestination, Milton's opinions are in accordance with the popular feeling. Mention, he says, is frequently made of those

* See the chapters on the Son of God and the Holy Spirit, in the Treatise on Christian Doctrine, and Dr. Sumner's Preliminary Observations.

who are written among the living, and of the book of life, but never of the book of death.

Among these dim and awful mysteries the mind of the poet delighted to wander, shunning no labour of research or severity of thought; proudly contemning the wisdom of the past, and fearless of the future—seeking sedulously, but in vain, to find the "mangled body" of Truth, and to pierce the gloom that mantles between the eternal, irreversible decrees and perfection of the Deity, and the frail, bounded, perishable conceptions of mortality.

The piety of Milton is no where more conspicuous than in his theological works, written in 1641, to serve the cause of the Presbyterians.* They were his first offerings at the shrine of religious freedom, and evidently came warm from the heart. The same vehemence of spirit which urged him to take up his pen has sometimes betrayed

* Of Reformation in England, the Reason of Church Government, Animadversions upon the Remonstrant, &c.

him into unjustifiable attacks upon his opponents; the arrogance and illiberality of which, even the intolerance of the times can barely palliate: but the sublime passages contained in these Treatises—the devotional raptures, or "hymns in prose," as he himself denominates them, with which they are relieved and dignified—and the minutely interesting statements he gives us of his habits and studies, can never be read without admiration and delight. With all their occasional gloom and coarse asperity, these works, perhaps, contain more of the poet in them than any of his subsequent prose writings.

Milton's early connection with the Puritans seems to have tinctured him a little with their superstitious notions. He is always willing to ascribe events to the direct interposition of Providence, rather than to the operation of natural causes. In his History, he carefully chronicles all the signs and portents witnessed by the monks; and after the death of Cromwell, when the people began to think that nothing but

"kingship" could restore trade, he blames them for "not remembering the plagues and pestilences that then wasted the city, such as, through God's mercy, they had never felt since."

The answer to Salmasius, with which the country "rung from side to side," although *Paradise Lost* crept slowly and silently into fame, is now but rarely consulted, even by the curious. That it is, in the main, honourable to the great talents and vast erudition of its author, is undisputed; but it is written in a language sacred, in the minds of scholars, to still nobler compositions, and, like all works written for a temporary purpose, it has had its day and is forgotten.

The AREOPAGITICA of Milton holds about the same rank in his prose compositions that *Paradise Lost* maintains with respect to his poetical. Single, insulated passages, equal to any it contains, may be found in some of his treatises; but in the "Speech" their peculiar excellencies are all united and their faults avoided. The argument never de-

generates into scurrility or puerile conceits: the dignity of the speaker is uniformly sustained; and his learning, wisdom, fancy, and eloquence, produce irresistible conviction and admiration. To have heard Milton deliver this speech—for the work is conceived in the style and spirit of the orations of antiquity—would have been a treat almost equal to the reading of *Paradise Lost.* With the enthusiastic ardour of an advocate, pleading in a just and generous cause—the "liberty of unlicensed printing"—Milton has sometimes pushed his positions too far: as, when demonstrating that in this world good and evil are inseparably connected, he contends that evil as well as good books should be read, in order to the constituting of human virtue, and the confirmation of truth. This would be subjecting the mass of mankind to a dangerous ordeal. Adam, he says, first knew good by evil; but Adam paid dearly for his knowledge.

The Liberty of the Press, that "palladium of all the civil, political, and religious rights

of an Englishman,"* and which is now so thoroughly inwoven into the frame of our Constitution, was not fully established till fifty years after the appearance of Milton's Treatise. The Protector dispensed with the office of licenser, but kept a wary eye upon the demeanour of the Press. Charles II. revived this odious restraint upon authors, and it was renewed by his successor, James II. The act expired in 1692, but even then, with all the popular feeling which the Revolution had infused into Parliament, it was deemed unsafe to remove the prohibition, and accordingly it was continued for two years longer.—So tardy are men of power in adopting the truths of the philosopher, and in appreciating justly their own interests!

ICONOCLASTES, and the HISTORY OF BRITAIN, appear to be the least laboured of all our author's productions. The *History*, as Johnson remarks, is written in a

* Junius.

rough, vigorous style: the author seems mainly anxious to get through with his task, honestly, and without magnifying the importance of his heroes, or of the events he describes. Of women he uniformly speaks with contempt—a canker which clung to the noble mind of Milton. Boadicea and her daughters "riding about in a chariot," are barely tolerable, in his eyes, and he does not fail to censure the vanity of the Greek historians, in embellishing the exploits of the British heroine; "not caring," he says, "to brand us with the rankest note of barbarism, as if in Britain women were men, and men women."* His description of a well-known incident in history, Canute's reproof of his courtiers, is highly characteristic of the work and its author:—

"I must not omit one remarkable action done by him, to shew the small power of kings in

* It is undoubtedly to Milton's domestic circumstances that we must attribute his "Turkish contempt for females." It is distinguishable in none of his productions written prior to the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce.*

respect of God; which, unless to Court parasites, needed no such laborious demonstration. He caused his Royal seat to be set on the shore, while the tide was coming in; and with all the state that Royalty could put into his countenance, said thus to the sea: 'Thou, sea, belongest to me, and the land whereon I sit is mine; nor hath any one unpunished resisted my commands: I charge thee come no further upon my land, neither presume to wet the feet of thy sovereign lord.' But the sea, as before, came rolling on, and, without reverence, both wet and dashed him. Whereat the King, quickly rising, wished all about him to behold and consider the weak and frivolous power of a king, and that none indeed deserved the name of a king but He whose eternal laws both heaven, earth, and sea obey.—A truth so evident of itself, as I said before, that, unless to shame his Court flatterers, who would not else be convinced, Canute needed not to have gone wet-shod home."*

* Mr. Wordsworth has versified this interesting anecdote of the Danish sovereign, and has evidently followed the version of Milton:—

"The Danish Conqueror, on his royal chair,
Mustering a face of haughtiest sovereignty,

The *Iconoclastes* was written by desire of the Parliament, whose secretary Milton then was, in answer to the *Icon Basilike*, one of the most interesting works in our language, and long believed to be the production of King Charles, in whose name and character it is written, but unquestionably the production of Dr. Gauden, bishop of Exeter.* In his answer, which is vigorously

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To aid a covert purpose, cried—" O, ye,
Approaching waters of the deep, that share
With this green isle my fortunes, come not where
Your master's throne is set!" Absurd decree!
A mandate uttered to the foaming sea,
Is to its motions less than wanton air.
—Then Canute, rising from the invaded throne,
Said to his servile courtiers, " Poor the reach,
The undisguised extent of mortal sway!
He only is a king, and he alone
Deserves the name (this truth the billows preach),
Whose everlasting laws, sea, earth, and heaven obey."

River Duddon, &c. p. 154.

* An excellent summary of the arguments respecting the genuineness of this work may be found in Malcolm Laing's *History of Scotland*; and also in Nichols's *Literary Illustrations*. Dr. Wordsworth, the present enlightened

and succinctly written, following the *Icon* chapter by chapter, Milton has concentrated all his harshness and uncharitableness—his hatred of royalty and episcopacy. The unexampled success of the *Icon*, fifty editions having, it is said, been printed in the first year of its appearance, and the returning loyalty and sympathy of the nation, evidently stung him to the quick, and sharpened his invective. As an example how far party-spirit may operate in vitiating the taste, and corrupting even the noblest understanding, we shall subjoin one extract from this work.

Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, has recently revived the controversy, by his publication entitled *Who Wrote Icon Basilike?* The internal testimony is certainly in favour of the King, being in strict accordance with the character of his latter days; but the external evidence on the side of Gauden is too strong to be resisted. Some discrepancies, however, occur, even in the internal proofs, not easily reconcilable with the *legitimacy* of the work. Thus Charles is made elaborately to defend his arraignment of the Five Members, although we know that he repented of this fatal indiscretion, and offered any reparation to the House for the breach of privilege, of which he acknowledged they had reason to complain.

After remarking that it had ever been the policy of tyrants to counterfeit religion, Milton observes, in reference to Charles, "I shall not instance an abstruse author, wherein the King might be less conversant, but one whom we well know was the closet companion of these his solitudes, *William Shakspeare*, who introduces the person of Richard the Third speaking in as high a strain of piety and mortification as is uttered in any passage of this book (the *Icon*), and sometimes to the same sense and purpose: *I intended*, saith he, *not only to oblige my friends, but mine enemies.* The like saith Richard, Act ii, scene 1:

> I do not know that Englishman alive
> With whom my soul is any jot at odds,
> More than the infant that is born to-night;
> I thank my God for my humility.

Other stuff of this sort may be read throughout the whole tragedy, wherein the poet used not much license in departing from the truth of history." How completely has Milton here sunk the poet in the Puritan and the partizan! The insidious manner

in which this instance of the King's taste is introduced to gratify his fanatical adversaries, who had shut up the theatres, and proposed that the walls of the churches should be painted black, to put men in mind of the blackness and darkness within them; and the Puritanical designation, "William Shakspeare," with the "stuff" that may be read in his tragedy, give no visible sign or token of the author of *L'Allegro* and *Comus*. The reader would also do well to contrast the "counterfeit" religion of Charles, which breathed concession and forgiveness to the last, and rendered the close of his life, embittered as it was with insult and disaster, a Paradise compared with that of Cromwell, with the *real* religion of his enemies, which led them to sacrifice their sovereign on the scaffold, against the wishes of the nation, and afterwards basely to trample on his memory. To Milton, the murder of the King was "covered under a mighty cloud of republican and fanatical illusions."* He

* Hume.

had read in sacred and profane history of the casting down of thrones, and the slaughter of tyrants; and his imagination, fired at once with a hatred of monarchy, and a love of republican liberty, magnified the errors of the unhappy monarch into crimes of the deepest dye, and led him to consider it even a virtue that all the rules of moral justice, and the precepts of Christianity, should be violated. And at last the hope of a republic, for which he was willing to sacrifice so much, proved but an empty dream! Who would not wish that these inborn stains on the fame of the poet were for ever washed away?

The TREATISES ON DIVORCE are, as Warburton remarks, the most closely reasoned of Milton's controversial works. The sheet-anchor of his argument is the law of Moses, which allowed of divorcement when the wife had ceased to find favour in the eyes of her husband in consequence of some uncleanness. This uncleanness, he contends, was not adultery only, but referred to the mind as well as the body. Reasoning on

this text, he warmly and poetically exclaims: —"It must be your suffrages and votes, O Englishmen, that this exploded decree of God and Moses may scape and come off fair, without the censure of a shameful abrogating; which, if yonder sun ride sure, and means not to break word with us to-morrow, was never yet abrogated by our Saviour!" The following is an amusing specimen of that *grim mirth* in which Milton occasionally indulges:—"To couple hatred, therefore, though Wedlock try all her golden links, and borrow to her aid all the iron manacles and fetters of law, it does but seek to twist a rope of sand, which was a task, they say, that posed the devil; and that sluggish fiend Ocnus, whom the poems tell us of, brought his idle cordage to as good effect, which never served to bind with, but to feed the ass that stood at his elbow." The poet was unquestionably sincere in his opinions on "the marrying score." His quarrel with his wife first turned his attention to the subject, and a prejudiced examination of the

Books of the Old Testament seems to have confirmed him in his heterodox notions. His after studies did not remove the delusion. In his *Treatise on Christian Doctrine*, to which, as Dr. Sumner remarks, being a posthumous work, no suspicion of insincerity can attach, he repeats his former sentiments, and also defends the lawfulness of polygamy, by endeavouring to graft the living fruits of Christianity upon the exploded formalisms of Judaism.

Milton, like Hume, threw out dogmas for the learned, not food for the multitude. His *Treatises on Divorce* were written for "those who have this high gift of wisdom to answer solidly, or be convinced;" and when arguing in favour of a perpetual Senate, one of the main props of his beloved image of a Republic—an image formed of more incongruous materials than that which troubled the spirit of the King of Babylon—he is careful to exclude all occasion of popular clamour. When vacancies occurred in the Grand Council, through the death of its members, others were to be elected, but

the elections were not to be "committed to the noise and shouting of a rude multitude: permitting only," he adds, "those of them who are rightly qualified, to nominate as many as they will; and out of that number others of a better breeding to chuse a less number more judiciously, till after a third or fourth sifting and refining, of exactest choice, they only be left chosen who are the due number, and seem, by most voices, the worthiest."* It does not seem to have entered into the mind of the poet, that by this sifting and winnowing of the votes, the great mass of the people would have been left without any real representatives, or any effective control over the Government, and that by his system the nation would infallibly have been placed under the dangerous, irresponsible power of an absolute Aristocracy.

But it is time that we should close these desultory, imperfect observations. Yet it

* Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth.

is a pleasing, and we hope not unedifying employment, to glance thus cursorily over the folios of our great poet—to trace, as it were on a chart, the varying current of his thoughts and feelings—the wanderings of his mighty mind—now flowing calmly and clearly within the graceful boundaries and "shady spaces" of Philosophy and Truth, now harsh and turbid, mingling with impure and noxious streams, or hurrying on alone in darkness, amidst the ruins of a fallen State—till at length resuming its natural channel, renewing its spent force, and gathering fresh strength from repose, we once more behold the majestic wanderer, slowly advancing to the plain—rolling his "amber stream" over "Elysian flowers" that never fade, and enriching and adorning the nation.

> Thus lovely Halcyons dive into the main,
> Then show far off their shining plumes again.

THE

POETRY

OF

MILTON'S PROSE.

69573

We may walk
In solitary groves, or in choice gardens,
From the variety of curious flowers
Contemplate Nature's workmanship and wonders:
And then, for change, near to the murmur of
Some bubbling fountain, we may hear him sing,
And in imagination conceive
With what melodious harmony a Choir
Of Angels sing above their Maker's praise!
And then, with chaste discourse, as we return,
Imp feathers to the broken wings of Time.

MASSINGER.

THE

POETRY

OF

MILTON'S PROSE.

SUBLIME PRAYER IN BEHALF OF THE CHURCH.

THOU, therefore, that sittest in light and glory unapproachable, Parent of angels and men;[1] next thee, I implore, Omnipotent King, Redeemer of that lost remnant whose nature thou didst assume, ineffable and everlasting Love! And thou the third subsistence of Divine infinitude, illumining Spirit, the joy and solace of created things, one tri-personal Godhead! look

1 Hail, holy Light! offspring of Heaven, first-born!
Or of the eternal co-eternal beam,
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity.

Par. Lost, Book III.

upon this thy poor and almost spent and expiring Church: leave her not thus a prey to these importunate wolves, that wait and think long till they devour thy tender flock;[2] these wild boars that have broke into thy vineyard, and left the print of their polluting hoofs on the souls of thy servants. O let them not bring about their damned designs, that stand now at the entrance of the bottomless pit, expecting the watchword to open and let out those dreadful locusts and scorpions, to re-involve us in that pitchy cloud of infernal darkness, where we shall never more see the Sun of thy Truth again, never hope for the

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2 This train of thought and metaphor was familiar to Milton, from his study of the Sacred Writings. He has made abundant use of it:—

> How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
> Enow of such as for their bellies' sake
> Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold.
>
> Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
> Daily devours apace.
>
> *Lycidas*, l. 113.
>
> Help us to save free conscience from the paw
> Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.
>
> *Sonnet to Cromwell.*
>
> Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves!
> Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
> To their own vile advantages shall turn,
> Of lucre and ambition; and the truth,
> With superstitions and traditions taint,
> Left only in those written records pure.
>
> *Par. Lost*, Book XII. l. 508.

cheerful Dawn, never more hear the Bird of Morning sing!

O thou that after the impetuous rage of five bloody inundations,[3] and the succeeding sword of intestine War, soaking the land in her own gore, didst pity the sad and ceaseless revolution of our swift and thick-coming sorrows, when we were quite breathless, of thy free grace didst motion peace and terms of covenant with us; and having first well nigh freed us from Anti-Christian thraldom, didst build up this Britannic Empire to a glorious and enviable height, with all her daughter-islands about her; stay us in this felicity, let not the obstinacy of our half-obedience and will-worship bring forth that viper of sedition, that for these four-score years hath been breeding to eat through the entrails of our peace; but let her cast her abortive spawn without the danger of this travailing and throbbing kingdom! That we may still remember in our solemn thanksgivings how for us the Northern Ocean, even to the frozen Thule, was scattered with the proud shipwrecks of the Spanish Armada, and the very maw of hell ransacked

3 Most probably the Roman, Saxon, Danish and Norman Invasions, and the wars of the White and Red Roses.

and made to give up her concealed destruction, ere she could vent it in that horrible and damned blast!

O how much more glorious will those former deliverances appear, when we shall know them not only to have saved us from greatest miseries past, but to have reserved us for greatest happiness to come! Hitherto thou hast but freed us, and that not fully, from the unjust and tyrannous claim of thy foes: now unite us entirely and appropriate us to thyself, tie us everlastingly in willing homage to the prerogative of thy eternal throne!

Then amidst the hymns and hallelujahs of saints, some one may perhaps be heard offering at high strains in new and lofty measures, to sing and celebrate thy divine mercies and marvellous judgments in this land, throughout all ages; whereby this great and warlike nation, instructed and inured to the fervent and continual practice of truth and righteousness, and casting far from her the rags of her old vices, may press on hard to that high and happy emulation, to be found the soberest, wisest, and most Christian people at that day when thou, the eternal and shortly-expected King, shalt open the

clouds to judge the several kingdoms of the world, and distributing national honours and rewards to religious and just Commonwealths, shalt put an end to all earthly tyrannies, proclaiming thy universal and mild monarchy through heaven and earth; when they, undoubtedly, that by their labours, counsels, and prayers, have been earnest for the common good of religion and their country, shall receive above the inferior orders of the Blessed, the regal addition of principalities, legions, and thrones into their glorious titles,[4] and in super-eminence of beatific vision, progressing the dateless irrevoluble circle of eternity, shall clasp inseparable hands with joy and bliss in over-measure for ever!—*Of Reformation in England.*

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[4] This gradation of rank and splendour, and of regal dominion, which Milton freely awarded to Heaven, but would have denied to Earth, he has nobly exemplified in the Wars of the Angels:—

> Forthwith, from all the ends of heaven, appear'd
> Under their hierarchs, in order bright:
> Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
> (Standards and gonfalons, 'twixt van and rear),
> Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
> Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees:
> Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
> Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love,
> Recorded eminent.
>
> *Par. Lost*, Book V. l. 586.

ZEAL.

Then Zeal, whose substance is ethereal, arming in complete diamond, ascends his fiery chariot, drawn with two blazing meteors figured like beasts, but of a higher breed than any the Zodiack yields, resembling two of those four which *Ezekiel* and *St. John* saw, the one visaged like a lion to express power, high authority, and indignation; the other of countenance like a man to cast derision and scorn upon perverse and fraudulent seducers: with these the invincible warrior Zeal, shaking loosely the slack reins, drives over the heads of scarlet Prelates, and such as are insolent to maintain traditions, bruising their stiff necks under his flaming wheels. Thus did the true Prophets of old combat with the false.

Apology for Smectymnuus.

TRUTH.

Truth indeed came once into the world with her Divine Master, and was a perfect shape

most glorious to look on; but when he ascended, and his Apostles after him were laid asleep, then straight arose a wicked race of deceivers, who, as that story goes of the Egyptian Typhon with his conspirators, how they dealt with the god Osiris, took the virgin Truth, hewed her lovely form into a thousand pieces, and scattered them to the four winds. From that time ever since, the sad friends of Truth, such as durst appear, imitating the careful search that Isis made for the mangled body of Osiris,[1] went up and down gathering up limb by limb, still as they could find them. We have not yet found them all Lords and Commons! nor ever shall do till her Master's second coming; he shall bring together

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1 Of Osiris the ancient poets and mythology supply copious information. He is said to have been King of Egypt, and to have been murdered by his brother Typhon, on his return from an expedition into Asia. His wife, Isis, at last found the "mangled body" in a chest, and interred it in an island near to Memphis. Shortly after the interment, a stately, beautiful ox appeared, and the Egyptians, believing it to be Osiris, included it among the numberless gods of their idolatry To this, and to the other superstitions connected with Osiris, Milton alludes in his *Hymn on the Nativity*, Stanza xxiv:

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest,
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipp'd ark.

every joint and member, and shall mould them into an immortal feature of loveliness and perfection!

Suffer not these licensing prohibitions to stand at every place of opportunity,[2] forbidding and disturbing them that continue seeking, that continue to do our obsequies to the torn body of our martyred saint. We boast our light, but if we look not wisely on the sun itself, it smites us into darkness. Who can discern those planets that are oft combust, and those stars of brightest magnitude that rise and set with the sun, until the opposite motion of their orbs bring them to such a place in the firmament where they may be seen evening and morning? The light which we have gained was given us, not to be ever staring on, but by it to discover onward things more remote from our knowledge.—*Areopagitica.*

2 The Parliament had just then (1644) issued an ordinance, continuing the usual restraint upon the Press, "that no book, pamphlet, or paper shall be printed, unless the same be first approved and licensed." Before the Civil Wars the Presbyterians had constantly upbraided the Prelates for exercising this authority, because they themselves were the sufferers; but no sooner, as Toland justly remarks, were they possessed of the Bishops' pulpit and power, than they exercised the same authority with more intolerable rigour and severity. Milton contended boldly for the liberty of the Press: his "Areopagitica; a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing," is the most powerful of all his prose compositions, and, had he written nothing else, would have entitled him to the lasting gratitude and veneration of his country.

Who knows not that Truth is strong next to the Almighty? She needs no policies, nor stratagems, nor licensings to make her victorious: those are the shifts, the defences that Error uses against her power; give her but room, and do not bind her when she sleeps, for then she speaks not true, as the old Proteus did, who spake oracles only when he was caught and bound, but then rather she turns herself into all shapes, except her own, and perhaps tunes her voice according to the time, as Micaiah did before Ahab, until she be adjured into her own likeness.—*Ibid.*

Truth is as impossible to be soiled by any outward touch as the sunbeam.

Doctrine of Divorce.

Some Princes and great statists have thought it a prime piece of necessary policy, to thrust themselves under disguise into a popular throng, to stand the night long under eaves of houses, and low windows, that they might hear every where the free utterances of private breasts, and amongst them find out the precious gem of truth, as amongst the numberless pebbles of the

shore,[3] whereby they might be the abler to discover and avoid that deceitful and close-couched evil of Flattery that ever attends them, and misleads them; and might skilfully know how to apply the several redresses of each malady of state.—*Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence.*

TRUTH AND JUSTICE.

It happened once, as we find in Esdras and Josephus, authors not less believed than any

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[3] Sir Isaac Newton, a little before he died, said: "I don't know what I may seem to the world, but as to myself I seem to have been only like a boy playing on the sea-shore, and diverting myself in now and then finding a smoother pebble or a prettier shell than ordinary, whilst the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me."

Spence's Anecdotes, p. 54.

Mr. Singer, the Editor of Spence, has anticipated us, in remarking that this interesting anecdote of our great philosopher's modest opinion of himself and his discoveries is only another proof of his consummate wisdom. It will recall, he adds, to the memory of the poetical reader, the following beautiful passage from the *Paradise Regained* of our great poet:—

> Who reads
> Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
> A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
> (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?)
> Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
> Deep versed in books and shallow in himself,
> Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
> And trifles for choice matters, worth a spunge,
> As children gathering pebbles on the shore.

Par. Regained, Book IV. l. 322

under sacred, to be a great and solemn debate in the court of Darius, what thing was to be accounted strongest of all other. He that could resolve this, in reward of his excellent wisdom, should be clad in purple, drink in gold, sleep on a bed of gold, and sit next Darius. None but they, doubtless, who were reputed wise, had the question propounded to them: who after some respite given them by the king to consider, in full assembly of all his lords and gravest counsellors, returned severally what they thought. The first held that wine was strongest; another that the king was strongest. But Zorobabel, prince of the captive Jews, and heir to the crown of Judah, being one of them, proved women to be stronger than the king, for that he himself had seen a concubine take his crown from off his head and set it upon her own; and others besides him have likewise seen the like feat done, and not in jest. Yet he proved on, and it was so yielded by the king himself and all his sages, that neither wine nor women, nor the king, but Truth, of all other things, was the strongest. For me, though neither asked, nor in a nation that gives such rewards to wisdom, I shall pronounce my sentence somewhat dif-

ferent from Zorobabel, and shall defend that either Truth and Justice are all one (for truth is but justice in our knowledge, and justice is but truth in our practice: and he indeed so explains himself, in saying that with truth is no accepting of persons, which is the property of justice), or else, if there be any odds, that Justice, though not stronger than Truth, yet by her office is to put forth and exhibit more strength in the affairs of mankind. For Truth is properly no more than contemplation; and her utmost efficiency is but teaching; but Justice, in her very essence, is all strength and activity; and hath a sword put into her hand, to use against all violence and oppression upon the face of the earth. She it is, most truly, who accepts no person, and exempts none from the severity of her stroke. She never suffers injury to prevail, but when falsehood first prevails over truth: and that also is a kind of justice done on them who are deluded. Though wicked kings and tyrants counterfeit her sword, as some did that buckler, fabled to fall from Heaven into the Capitol, yet she communicates her power to none but such as, like herself, are just, or at least will do justice. We may conclude, therefore, that Justice,

above all other things, is, and ought to be, the strongest: she is the strength, the kingdom, the power, and majesty of all ages.—*Iconoclastes.*

MARRIAGE.

Marriage is a covenant the very being whereof consists in unfeigned love and peace; and of matrimonial love, no doubt but that was chiefly meant which by the ancient sages was thus parabled: that Love, if he be not twin-born, yet hath a brother wondrous like him, called Anteros, whom while he seeks all about, his chance is to meet with many false and feigning desires, that wander singly up and down in his likeness. By them, in their borrowed garb, Love, though not wholly blind, as Poets wrong him, yet having but one eye, as being an archer aiming, and that eye not the quickest in this dark region here below, which is not Love's proper sphere, partly out of the simplicity and credulity which is natural to him, often deceived, embraces and consorts him with the obvious and suborned striplings, as if they were his mother's own sons, for so he thinks them. But after a

while, as his manner is, when soaring up into the high tower of his Apogæum, above the shadow of the earth, he darts out the rays of his then most piercing eyesight, upon the impostures and trim disguises that were used with him, and discerns that this is not his genuine brother, as he imagined: he has no longer the power to hold fellowship with such a personated mate; for straight his arrows lose their golden heads and shed their purple feathers, his silken braids untwine, and slip their knots, and that original and fiery virtue given him by Fate all on a sudden goes out, and leaves him undeified and despoiled of all his force; till, finding Anteros at last, he kindles and repairs the almost faded ammunition of his deity, by the reflection of a co-equal and homogeneal fire. Thus mine author sung it to me;[1] and by the leave of those who would be counted the only grave ones, this is no mere amatorious novel (though to be wise and skilful in these matters, men, heretofore of greatest name in virtue, have esteemed it one of the highest arcs that human Contemplation, circling upwards, can make from the globy sea

1 Cicero—de Naturâ Deorum, lib. iii. cap. 23.

whereon she stands): but this is a deep and serious verity, shewing that love in marriage cannot live nor subsist unless it be mutual.

Doctrine of Divorce.

There is a peculiar comfort in the married state, beside the genial bed, which no other society affords. No mortal nature can endure, either in the actions of religion or study of wisdom, without sometimes slackening the cords of intense thought and labour; which, lest we should think faulty, God himself conceals us not his own recreations before the world was built:—"I was," saith the Eternal Wisdom, "daily his delight, playing always before him."[2] And to him indeed wisdom is as a high tower of pleasure, but to us a steep hill, and we toiling ever about the bottom: he executes with ease the exploits of his omnipotence, as easy as with

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2 Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth.

Then I was by him, as one brought up with him; and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him.

Proverbs, chap. viii. v. 25 and 30.

Before the hills appear'd or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father.

Par. Lost, Book VII. l. 8.

us it is to will; but no worthy enterprize can be done by us without continual plodding and wearisomeness to our faint and sensitive abilities. We cannot, therefore, always be contemplative or pragmatical abroad, but have need of some delightful intermissions, wherein the enlarged soul may leave off a while her severe schooling; and, like a glad youth in wandering vacancy, may keep her holidays to joy and harmless pastime; which, as she cannot well do without company, so in no company so well as where the different sex, in most resembling unlikeness, and most unlike resemblance, cannot but please best, and be pleased in the aptitude of that variety.[3]—*Tetrachordon.*

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3 Hail, wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise! of all things common else.
By thee adulterous lust was driv'n from men
Among the bestial herd to range; by thee
(Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure),
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.
Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!
Whose bed is undefiled, and chaste pronounced,
Present or past; as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs; here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings;
Reigns here and revels. *Par. Lost*, Book IV. l. 750.

We shall perhaps be excused for inserting here, as an appropriate

RASH, UNHAPPY MARRIAGES.

If we do but err in our choice, err but one minute—one moment after those mighty syllables

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and beautiful illustration of the above, the words of a distinguished contemporary of Milton, the pious and eloquent JEREMY TAYLOR:

"There is nothing can please a man without love; and if a man be weary of the wise discourses of the Apostles, and of the innocency of an even and a private fortune, or hates peace, or a fruitful year, he hath reaped thorns and thistles from the choicest flowers of Paradise; for nothing can sweeten felicity itself but love; but when a man dwells in love, then the breasts of his wife are pleasant as the droppings upon the hill of Hermon, her eyes are fair as the light of heaven, she is a fountain sealed, and he can quench his thirst, and ease his cares, and lay his sorrow down upon her lap, and can retire home to his sanctuary and refectory, and his gardens of sweetness and chaste refreshments. No man can tell, but he that loves his children, how many delicious accents make a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges; their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society."

The conclusion is, if possible, still more tender and eloquent:—

"It is fit that I should infuse a bunch of myrrh into the festival goblet, and, after the Egyptian manner, serve up a dead man's bones at a feast: I will only shew it, and take it away again; it will make the wine bitter, but wholesome. But those married pairs that live as remembering that they must part again, and give an account how they treat themselves and each other, shall, at that day of their death, be admitted to glorious espousals; and when they shall live again, be married to their Lord, and partake of his glories, with Abraham and Joseph, St. Peter and St. Paul, and all the married Saints. All those things that now please us shall pass from us, or we from them; but those things that concern the other life are permanent as the numbers of eternity: and although at the resurrection there shall be no relation of husband and wife, and no marriage shall be celebrated but the marriage of the Lamb; yet then shall be remembered how men and women passed through this state, which is a type of that, and from this sacramental union all holy pairs shall pass to the spiritual and

pronounced, which take upon them to join heaven and hell together unpardonably, till death pardon: this divine blessing, that looked but now with such a humane smile upon us, and spoke such gentle reason, straight vanishes like a fair sky, and brings on such a scene of cloud and tempest as turns all to shipwreck, without haven or shore, but to a ransomless captivity.—*Ibid.*

THE REFORMATION.

When I recal to mind, at last, after so many dark ages, wherein the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the Church; how the bright and blissful Reformation, by Divine power, strook through the black and settled night of ignorance and Anti-Christian tyranny, methinks a soveran and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him that reads or hears, and the sweet odour of the returning Gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of Heaven. Then was the sacred BIBLE sought out of the dusty corners, where

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eternal, where love shall be their portion, and joys shall crown their heads, and they shall lie in the bosom of Jesus, and in the heart of God, to eternal ages."—Sermons: *The Marriage Ring.*

profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it, the schools opened, divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues, the Princes and Cities trooping apace to the new-erected banner of Salvation, the Martyrs, with the unresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red Dragon.—*Of Reformation in England.*

ANTIQUITY NO GUIDE IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

He that shall bind himself to make antiquity his rule, if he read but part, besides the difficulty of choice, his rule is deficient, and utterly unsatisfying: for there may be other writers of another mind, which he hath not seen, and if he undertake all, the length of man's life cannot extend to give him a full and requisite knowledge of what was done in antiquity. Why do we, therefore, stand worshipping and admiring this unactive and lifeless Colossus, that like a carved giant, terribly menacing to children and weaklings, lifts up his club, but strikes not, and is subject to the muting of every sparrow? If

you let him rest upon his basis, he may perhaps delight the eyes of some with his huge and mountainous bulk, and the quaint workmanship of his massy limbs; but if ye go about to take him in pieces, ye may mar him; and if you think, like Pigmies, to turn and wind him whole as he is, besides your vain toil and sweat, he may chance to fall upon your own heads.

Animadversions upon the Remonstrants' Defence.

In the midst of many forgeries, where shall we fix to dare say this is Ignatius? As for his style, who knows it?—disfigured and interrupted as it is, except where they meet with any thing sound and orthodox, there they find Ignatius; and then they believe him not for his own authority, but for a truth's sake, which they derive from elsewhere: to what end, then, should they cite him as authentic for Episcopacy, when they cannot know what is authentic in him? How can they bring satisfaction from such an author, to whose very essence the reader must be fain to contribute his own understanding? Had God ever intended that we should have sought any part of useful instruction from Ignatius, doubtless he would not have so ill provided for our knowledge

as to send him to our hands in this broken and disjointed plight; and if he intended no such thing, we do injuriously in thinking to taste better the pure Evangelic manna, by seasoning our mouths with the tainted scraps and fragments of an unknown table; and searching among the verminous and polluted rags dropt overworn from the toiling shoulders of Time, with these deformedly to quilt and interlace the entire, the spotless and undecaying robe of Truth, the daughter, not of Time, but of Heaven, only bred up here below in Christian hearts, between two grave and holy nurses, the Doctrine and Discipline of the Gospel.—*Of Prelatical Episcopacy.*

I trust they for whom God hath reserved the honour of reforming this Church will easily perceive their adversaries' drift in calling for antiquity: they fear the plain field of the Scriptures, the chase is too hot; they seek the dark, the bushy, the tangled forest; they would imbosk:[1]

[1] Milton might have said, with Comus—

> I know each lane, and every alley green,
> Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
> And every *bosky* bourn, from side to side.

they feel themselves strook in the transparent streams of divine truth; they would plunge and tumble, and think to lie hid in the foul weeds and muddy waters where no plummet can reach the bottom. But let them beat themselves like whales, and spend their oil, till they be dragged ashore; though wherefore should the ministers give them so much line for shifts and delays? Wherefore should they not urge only the Gospel, and hold it ever in their faces, like a mirror of diamond, till it dazzle and pierce their misty eye-balls?—maintaining it the honour of its absolute sufficiency and supremacy inviolable.

Of Reformation in England.

THE SCRIPTURES SUFFICIENTLY PLAIN.

But it will be replied, the Scriptures are difficult to be understood, and therefore require the explanation of the Fathers. 'Tis true, there be some Books, and especially some places in those Books, that remain clouded; yet ever that which is most necessary to be known is most easy, and that which is most difficult so far ex-

pounds itself ever as to tell how little it imports our saving knowledge. Hence to infer a general obscurity over all the text is a mere suggestion of the devil, to dissuade men from reading it, and casts an aspersion of dishonour both upon the mercy, truth, and wisdom of God. We count it no gentleness or fair-dealing in a man of power amongst us, to require strict and punctual obedience, and yet give out all his commands ambiguous and obscure: we should think he had a plot upon us; certainly such commands were no commands, but snares. The very essence of truth is plainness and brightness: the darkness and crookedness is our own. The wisdom of God created understanding fit and proportionable to truth, the object and end of it, as the eye to the thing visible. If our understanding have a film of ignorance over it, or be blear with gazing on other false glisterings, what is that to truth? If we will purge with soveran eye-salve that intellectual ray which God hath planted in us, then we would believe the Scriptures protesting their own plainness and perspicuity, calling to them to be instructed, not only the wise and learned, but the simple, the poor, the babes—foretelling an extraordinary effusion

of God's spirit upon every age, and sex—attributing to all men, and requiring from them, the ability of searching, trying, and examining all things, and by the Spirit discerning that which is good.[1]—*Ibid.*

ACTIVE VIRTUE.

He that can apprehend and consider vice, with all her baits and seeming pleasures, and yet abstain, and yet distinguish, and yet prefer that which is truly better, he is the true warfaring Christian. I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where that immortal garland is to be run for, not without dust and heat.

Areopagitica.

POWER AND EFFICACY OF BOOKS.

I deny not but that it is of greatest concernment in the Church and Commonwealth to have

[1] Those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Par. Lost, Book XII. l. 513

a vigilant eye how books demean themselves, as well as men: and thereafter to confine, imprison, and do sharpest justice on them as malefactors; for books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them, to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve, as in a vial, the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them. I know they are as lively and as vigorously productive as those fabulous dragons' teeth; and being sown up and down, may chance to spring up armed men. And yet, on the other hand, unless wariness be used, as good almost kill a man as kill a good book: who kills a man, kills a reasonable creature, God's image; but he who destroys a good book kills reason itself, kills the image of God, as it were, in the eye. Many a man lives a burden to the earth; but a good book is the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life!

'Tis true, no age can restore a life whereof, perhaps, there is no great loss; and revolutions of ages do not oft recover the loss of a rejected truth, for the want of which whole nations fare the worse. We should be wary, therefore, what

persecution we raise against the living labours of public men; how we spill that seasoned life of man, preserved and stored up in books, since we see a kind of homicide may be thus committed, sometimes a martyrdom; and, if it extend to the whole impression, a kind of massacre, whereof the execution ends not in the slaying of an elemental life, but strikes at the ethereal and sift essence, the breath of reason itself; it slays an immortality rather than a life.—*Ibid.*

FREE SPIRIT OF THE TIMES—A NOBLE AND PUISSANT NATION.

As in a body, when the blood is fresh, the spirits pure and vigorous, not only to vital, but to rational faculties, and those in the pertest operations of wit and subtlety, it argues in what good plight and constitution the body is; so when the cheerfulness of the people is so sprightly up, as that it has not only wherewith to guard well its own freedom and safety, but to spare and to bestow upon the solidest and sublimest points of controversy and new inventions, it betokens us not degenerated, nor drooping

to a fatal decay; but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption, to outlive these pangs, and wax young again, entering the glorious ways of truth and prosperous virtue, destined to become great and honourable in these latter ages.

Methinks I see in my mind a noble and puissant nation rousing herself like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her invincible locks: methinks I see her like an eagle mewing her mighty youth,[1] and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full mid-day beam; purging and unscaling her long-abused sight at the fountain itself of heavenly radiance: while the whole noise of timorous and flocking birds, with those also that love the twilight, flutter about, amazed at what she means, and in their envious gabble would prognosticate a year of sects and schisms.—*Ibid.*

MISERIES OF ENGLAND,

Amongst many and accessory causes that support Monarchy, these are not of least reckoning,

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[1] *Mewing*—moulting. Thus Izaak Walton says, "I should discourse of hawks, then treat of their ayries, *mewings*, castings, and renovation of their feathers."

though common to all other states: the love of the subjects, the multitude and valour of the people, and store of treasure. In all these things hath the kingdom been of late sore weakened, and chiefly by the Prelates. First, let any man consider, that if any Prince shall suffer under him a commission of authority to be exercised, till all the land groan and cry out, as against a whip of scorpions, whether this be not likely to lessen and keel the affections of the subject. Next, what numbers of faithful and freeborn Englishmen, and good Christians, have been constrained to forsake their dearest home, their friends and kindred, whom nothing but the wide ocean, and the savage deserts of America, could hide and shelter from the fury of the Bishops?[1]

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1 "The severe censures in the Star Chamber, and the greatness of the fines, and the rigorous proceedings to impose ceremonies, the suspending and silencing multitudes of ministers, for not reading in the Church the Book of Sports to be exercised on the Lord's day, caused many of the nation, both ministers and others, to sell their estates, and to set sail for *New England*, where they held a plantation by patent from the King."—*Rushworth's Hist. Coll.* Vol. II. p. 410.

So eagerly did the Puritans avail themselves of this dernier resort, that the Court became alarmed at the general defection, and issued a Proclamation forbidding "all merchants, masters, and owners of ships," from setting sail with passengers, till they had obtained special licence from his Majesty's Privy Council. Eight vessels, filled with passengers, were then lying in the Thames; and among the indivi-

O, if we could but see the shape of our dear mother England,[b] as poets are wont to give a personal form to what they please, how would she appear, think ye, but in a mourning weed, with ashes upon her head, and tears flowing abundantly from her eyes, to behold so many of her children exposed at once, and thrust from things of dearest necessity, because their conscience could not assent to things which the Bishops thought indifferent? What more binding than conscience? What more free than indifferency? Cruel then must that indifferency needs be that shall violate the strict necessity of conscience; merciless and inhuman that free choice and liberty that shall break asunder the bonds of religion.[2] Let the astrologer be dismayed at the portentous blaze of comets and impressions in the air, as foretelling troubles

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duals who were thus prevented from quitting their native shore were Cromwell and Hampden! The King, as Hume sagaciously remarks, had afterward full leisure to repent this exercise of his authority.

[2] ——————What will they then
But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith, not another's? (for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible?) Yet many will presume,
Whence heavy persecution shall arise.

Par. Lost, Book XII. l. 524.

and changes to States,[3] I shall believe there cannot be a more ill-boding sign to a nation

3 ——————As when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air,
Shorn of his beams, or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. *Par. Lost*, Book I. l. 594.

Pope, who was a constant reader of Milton, has evidently copied this well-known simile, in his *Temple of Fame*:—

Of prodigies and portents seen in air,
Of fires and plagues, and stars with blazing hair,
Of turns of fortune, changes in the State.

In his *History of Britain*, describing the accession of Edward the Younger to the throne, Milton remarks that "Comets were seen in Heaven, portending not famine only, which followed the next year, but the troubled state of the whole realm, not long after to ensue." It is surprising that so cordial a hater of Monks and traditions should have chronicled these prognostications. The following is almost worthy of a place in his *Paradise of Fools*: "In the meanwhile (reign of Harold) a blazing star, seven mornings together, about the end of April, was seen to stream terribly, not only over England, but other parts of the world; foretelling here, as was thought, the great changes approaching, plainliest prognosticated by Elmer, a Monk of Malmesbury, who could not foresee, when time was, the breaking of his own legs, for soaring too high. He, in his youth, strangely aspiring, had made and fitted wings to his hands and feet; with these, on the top of a tower, spread out to gather air, he flew more than a furlong; but, the wind being too high, came fluttering down, to the maiming of all his limbs; yet so conceited of his art, that he attributed the cause of his fall to the want of a tail, as birds have, which he forgot to make to his hinder parts."

For inserting this ludicrous adventure here, the Editor would beg to say, with Milton, "though seeming too light in the midst of a sad narration, yet for the strangeness thereof, I thought worthy enough the placing as I found it placed in my author." Had the theory of Lord Monboddo, that men were originally born with tails, been founded in fact, Elmer would probably have circumnavigated the whole island with his "plumy vans."

Butler has very happily ridiculed the above superstitious reverence for

(God turn the omen from us!) than when the inhabitants, to avoid insufferable grievances at home, are enforced by heaps to forsake their native country.—*Of Reformation in England.*

HEAVENLY SUCCOUR.

But ever blessed be He, and ever glorified, that from his high watch-tower in the heavens,[1] discerning the crooked ways of perverse and cruel men, hath hitherto maimed and infatuated all their damnable inventions, and deluded their great wizards with a delusion fit for fools and children. Had God been so minded, He could have sent a spirit of mutiny amongst us, as he

signs and tokens, in describing the formidable *beard* of his hero:—

> This hairy Meteor did denounce
> The fall of sceptres and of crowns;
> With grizzle type did represent
> Declining age of Government;
> And tell, with hieroglyphic spade,
> Its own grave and the State's were made.

Hudibras was published some years before Milton's *History*, or *Paradise Lost*, else one might have been tempted to believe that, in the above passage, the satirist aimed a blow at his great contemporary.

1 To hear the lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night
From his watch-tower in the skies.
L'Allegro.

did between Abimelech and the Sechemites, to have made our funerals, and slain heaps, more in number than the miserable surviving remnant; but He, when we least deserved, sent out a gentle gale and message of peace, from the wings of those his cherubims that fan his mercy-seat.—*Ibid.*

THE NOBLES AND PEOPLE OF ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.

Nor shall the wisdom, the moderation, the Christian piety, the constancy of our Nobility and Commons of England be ever forgotten: whose calm and temperate connivance could sit still and smile out the stormy bluster of men more audacious and precipitant than of solid and deep reach, until their own fury had run itself out of breath, assailing, by rash and heady approaches, the impregnable situation of our liberty and safety, that laughed such weak enginery to scorn, such poor drifts to make a national war of a surplice brabble, a tippet scuffle, and engage the unattainted honour of English knighthood to unfurl the streaming

Red-Cross, or to rear the horrid standard of those fatal guly dragons, for so unworthy a purpose as to force upon their fellow subjects that which themselves are weary of—the skeleton of a Mass-book.

Nor must the patience, the fortitude, the firm obedience of the Nobles and People of Scotland, striving against manifold provocations, nor must their sincere and moderate proceedings hitherto, be unremembered, to the shameful conviction of all their detractors.

Go on, both hand in hand, O NATIONS, never to be disunited! be the praise and the heroic song of all posterity: merit this, but seek only virtue, not to extend your limits: for what needs to win a fading triumphant laurel out of the tears of wretched men?—but to settle the pure worship of God in his Church, and justice in the State. Then shall the hardest difficulties smooth out themselves before ye; envy shall sink to hell, craft and malice be confounded, whether it be home-bred mischief or outlandish cunning; yea, other nations will then covet to serve ye: for lordship and victory are but the pages of justice and virtue. Commit securely to true wisdom the vanquishing and uncasing of

craft and subtlety, which are but her two runagates: join your invincible might to do worthy and godlike deeds, and then he that seeks to break your union, a cleaving curse be his inheritance to all generations!—*Ibid.*

CHARACTER OF THE ENGLISH NATION.

Lords and Commons of England! consider what nation it is whereof ye are; and whereof ye are the Governors; a nation not slow and dull, but of a quick, ingenious, and piercing spirit; acute to invent, subtle and sinewy to discourse, not beneath the reach of any point the highest that human capacity can soar to. Therefore the studies of learning in her deepest sciences have been so ancient and so eminent among us, that writers of good antiquity and able judgment have been persuaded that even the school of Pythagoras and the Persian wisdom took beginning from the old philosophy of this island. And that wise and civil Roman, Julius Agricola, who governed here once for Cæsar, preferred the natural wits of Britain before the laboured

studies of the French. Nor is it for nothing that the grave and frugal Transylvanian sends out yearly from as far as the mountainous borders of Russia, and beyond the Hercynian wilderness, not their youth, but their staid men, to learn our language and our theologic arts. Yet, that which is above all this, the favour and the love of Heaven, we have great argument to think in a peculiar manner, propitious and propending towards us. Why else was this nation chosen before any other, that out of her, as out of Sion, should be proclaimed and sounded forth the first tidings and trumpet of Reformation to all Europe? And had it not been for the obstinate perverseness of our prelates, against the divine and admirable spirit of Wickliffe, to suppress him as a schismatic and innovator, perhaps neither the Bohemian Husse, and Jerome, no, nor the name of Luther, or of Calvin, had been ever known: the glory of reforming all our neighbours had been completely ours.

Behold, now, this vast city; a city of refuge, the mansion-house of liberty, encompassed and surrounded with his protection; the shop of war hath not there more anvils and hammers waking

to fashion out the plates and instruments of armed justice in defence of beleaguered truth, than there be pens and heads there, sitting by their studious lamps, musing, searching, revolving new notions and ideas, wherewith to present, as with their homage and their fealty, the approaching reformation: others as fast reading, trying all things, assenting to the force of reason and convincement. What could a man require more from a nation so pliant, and so prone to seek after knowledge? What wants there to such a towardly and pregnant soil, but wise and faithful labourers, to make a knowing people, a nation of prophets, of sages, and of worthies? We reckon more than five months yet to harvest; there need not be five weeks, had we but eyes to lift up, the fields are white already.[1] Where there is much desire to learn, there of necessity will be much arguing, much writing, many opinions: for opinion in good men is but knowledge in the making. Under these fantastic terrors of sect and schism, we wrong the earnest and zealous thirst after knowledge and understanding which God hath stirred up in this

[1] St. John, chap. iv. v. 35.

city. What some lament of, we rather should rejoice at, should rather praise this pious forwardness among men, to re-assume the ill-deputed care of their religion into their own hands again. A little generous prudence, a little forbearance of one another, and some grain of charity, might win all these diligences to join and unite into one general and brotherly search after Truth; could we but forego this prelatical tradition of crowding free consciences and Christian liberties into canons and precepts of men.' I doubt not, if some great and worthy stranger should come among us, wise to discern the mould and temper of a people, and how to govern it, observing the high hopes and aims, the diligent alacrity of our extended thoughts and reasonings in the pursuance of truth and freedom, but that he would cry out, as Pyrrhus did, admiring the Roman docility and courage: "If such were my Epirots, I would not despair the greatest design that could be attempted, to make a church or kingdom happy!" Yet these are the men cried out against for schismatics and sectaries; as if, while the Temple of the Lord was building, some cutting, some squaring the marble, others hewing the cedars,

there should be a sort of irrational men who could not consider there must be many schisms and many dissections made in the quarry and in the timber, ere the house of God can be built. And when every stone is laid artfully together, it cannot be united into a continuity, it can but be contiguous in this world: neither can every piece of the building be of one form; nay, rather the perfection consists in this, that out of many moderate varieties and brotherly dissimilitudes that are not vastly disproportional, arises the goodly and the graceful symmetry that commends the whole pile and structure. Let us therefore be more considerate Builders, more wise in spiritual Architecture, when great reformation is expected. For now the time seems come, wherein *Moses*, the great Prophet, may sit in heaven, rejoicing to see that memorable and glorious wish of his fulfilled, when not only our seventy Elders, but all the Lord's people, are become Prophets. No marvel then, though some men, and some good men too, perhaps, but young in goodness as *Joshua* then was, envy them. They fret, and out of their own weakness are in agony, lest these divisions and subdivisions will undo us. The adversary again

applauds, and waits the hour when they have branched themselves out, saith he, small enough into parties and partitions, then will be our time. Fool! he sees not the firm root out of which we all grow, though into branches, nor will beware until he see our small divided maniples cutting through at every angle of his ill-united and unwieldy brigade.—*Areopagitica.*

Wherever mention is made of countries, manners, or men, the English people, among the first that shall be praised, may deserve to be accounted a right pious, right honest, and right hardy nation.—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

Whatever else ye can exact, worthy Senators, will scarce concern a third part of the British name; but the benefit and good of this your magnanimous example (if they should alter the law of Divorce), will easily spread far beyond the banks of Tweed and the Norman Isles. It would not be the first or second time since our ancient Druids, by whom this Island was the cathedral of Philosophy to France, left off their Pagan rites, that England hath had this honour

vouchsafed from Heaven to give out Reformation to the world. Who was it, but our English Constantine, that baptized the Roman Empire? Who was it, but the Northumbrian Willibrode, and Winnefred of Devon, with their followers, were the first Apostles of Germany? Who but Alcuin and Wickliffe, our countrymen, opened the eyes of Europe; the one in arts, the other in religion? LET NOT ENGLAND FORGET HER PRECEDENCE, OF TEACHING NATIONS HOW TO LIVE.[2]—*Doctrine of Divorce.*

HEROIC ACTIONS PRODUCE ELOQUENT PENS.

For worthy deeds are not often destitute of worthy relaters, as, by a certain fate, great acts

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Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot, 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That like to rich and various gems inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
And wield their little tridents: but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities.

Masque of Comus, l. 18.

and great eloquence have most commonly gone hand in hand, equalling and honouring each other in the same ages. 'Tis true, that in obscurest times, by shallow and unskilful writers, the indistinct noise of many battles, and devastations of many kingdoms, over-run and lost, hath come to our ears. For what wonder, if in all ages ambition and the love of rapine have stirred up greedy and violent men to bold attempts, in wasting and ruining wars, which to Posterity hath left the work of wild beasts and destroyers, rather than the deeds and monuments of men and conquerors? But he whose just and true valour uses the necessity of war and dominion not to destroy, but to prevent destruction, to bring in liberty against tyrants, law and civility among barbarous nations, knowing that, when he conquers all things else, he cannot conquer time and detraction, wisely conscious of this his want, as well as of his worth, not to be forgotten or concealed, honours, and hath recourse to the aid of Eloquence, his friendliest and best supply; by whose immortal record his noble deeds, which else were transitory, becoming fixed and durable against the force of years and generations, he fails not to

continue through all posterity, over envy, death, and time, also victorious. Therefore, when the esteem of science and liberal study waxes low in the Commonwealth, we may presume that also there all civil virtue, and worthy action, is grown as low to a decline; and then Eloquence, as it were, consorted in the same destiny with the decrease and fall of virtue, corrupts also and fades.—*History of Britain.*

NATURE COMPARED TO THE PLANETARY SYSTEM.

For Nature hath her *zodiack* also, keeps her great annual circuit over human things, as truly as the sun and planets in the firmament; hath her anomalies, hath her obliquities in ascensions and declinations, accesses and recesses, as blamelessly as they in Heaven. And sitting in her planetary orb, with two reins in each hand, one strait, the other loose, tempers the course of minds as well as bodies to several conjunctions and oppositions, friendly or unfriendly aspects, consenting oftenest with reason, but never contrary. This in the effect no man of

meanest reach but daily sees; and though to every one it appear not in the cause, yet to a clear capacity, well-nurtured with good reading and observation, it cannot but be plain and visible.—*Tetrachordon.*

EDUCATION.

The end of learning is to repair the ruins of our first parents, by regaining to know God aright, and out of that knowledge to love him, to imitate him, to be like him, as we may the nearest by possessing our souls of true virtue, which being united to the heavenly grace of faith, makes up the highest perfection. But because our understanding cannot in this body found itself but on sensible things, nor arrive so clearly to the knowledge of God and things invisible as by orderly conning over the visible and inferior creature, the same method is necessarily to be followed in all discreet teaching. And seeing every nation affords not experience and tradition enough for all kind of learning, therefore we are chiefly taught the languages of those people who have at any time been most

industrious after wisdom; so that language is but the instrument conveying to us things useful to be known. And though a linguist should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the world into, yet if he have not studied the solid things in them, as well as the words and lexicons, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man, as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother-dialect only.

I shall detain you now no longer in the demonstration of what we should not do, but straight conduct you to a hill-side, where I will point you out the right path of a virtuous and noble education; laborious indeed at the first ascent, but else so smooth, so green, so full of goodly prospects and melodious sounds on every side, that the harp of Orpheus was not more charming.[1]

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1 Milton then proceeds to describe the arcana of his system, from which, with the partiality of a projector, he anticipated such general advantage. His plan was intended to supersede our Universities, and is modelled in direct opposition to them. He proposes that Academies, capable of accommodating each a hundred and fifty persons, should be established in every city, and that every branch of polite learning, "from Lilly to commencing, as they term it, Master of Art," should be taught. Much time, he thinks, is lost in "too oft idle vacancies," and in "forcing the empty wits of children to compose themes, verses, and orations." In teaching Latin, he wishes the Italian pronunciation to be followed, as "we Englishmen being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a

I call a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war.

The main skill and groundwork will be to temper them such lectures and explanations upon every opportunity, as may lead and draw them in willing obedience, inflamed with the study of learning and the admiration of virtue, stirred up with high hopes of living to be brave men and worthy patriots, dear to God, and famous to all ages. That they may despise and scorn all their childish and ill-taught qualities, to delight in manly and liberal exercises, which he who hath the art and proper eloquence to catch them with, what with mild and effectual persuasions, and what with the intimation of some fear, if need be, but chiefly by his own example, might, in a short space, gain them to an incredible diligence and courage; infusing into

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southern tongue." He is more indulgent to another English custom, now greatly disused, *wrestling*. "They must be practiced," he says, "in all the locks and gripes of Wrestling, wherein Englishmen were woht to excel, as need may often be in fight to tug, to grapple and to close." For the more important particulars of the system, we must refer the reader to the treatise itself. The general observations quoted above are no less just than felicitous; but of the plan, as a whole, we think its illustrious projector said truly, that "it was not a bow for every man to shoot in."

their young breasts such an ingenuous and noble ardour as would not fail to make many of them renowned and matchless men.

The interim of unsweating themselves (after athletic exercises), and convenient rest before meat, may both with profit and delight be taken up, in recreating and composing their travailed spirits, with the solemn and divine harmonies of Music heard or learned; either while the skilful organist plies his grave and fancied descant in lofty fugues, or the whole symphony with artful and unimaginable touches adorn and grace the well-studied chords of some choice composer; sometimes the lute or soft organ stop waiting on elegant voices, either to religious, martial, or civil ditties, which, if wise men and prophets be not extremely out, have a great power over dispositions and manners, to smooth and make them gentle from rustic harshness and distempered passions.

Besides these constant exercises at home, there is another opportunity of gaining experience to be won from pleasure itself abroad. In those vernal seasons of the year, when the air is calm and pleasant, it were an injury and sullenness against Nature not to go out and see

her riches, and partake in her rejoicing with heaven and earth. I shall not, therefore, be a persuader to them of studying much then, after two or three years that they have well laid their grounds, but to ride out in companies, with prudent and staid guides, to all the quarters of the land; learning and observing all places of strength, all commodities of building and of soil, for towns and tillage, harbours and ports for trade. Sometimes taking sea as far as to our navy, to learn there also what they can in the practical knowledge of sailing and of sea-fight. These ways would try all their peculiar gifts of nature, and, if there were any secret excellence among them, would fetch it out, and give it fair opportunities to advance itself by, which could not but mightily redound to the good of this nation, and bring into fashion again those old admired excellencies with far more advantage now in this purity of Christian knowledge.—*Letter to Mr. Samuel Hartlib.*

IMPORTANCE OF THE CLERICAL OFFICE.

There is no employment more honourable, more worthy to take up a great spirit, more requiring a generous and free nurture, than to be the messenger and herald of heavenly truth from God to man, and by the faithful work of holy doctrine to procreate a number of faithful men, making a kind of creation like to God's, by infusing his spirit and likeness into them, to their salvation, as God did into him; arising to what climate soever he turn him, like that sun of righteousness that sent him with healing in his wings, and new light to break in upon the chill and gloomy hearts of his hearers, raising out of darksome barrenness a delicious and fragrant spring of saving knowledge and good works. —*Animadversions upon the Remonstrants' Defence.*

EFFECTS OF A FAITHFUL MINISTRY.

Whereas temporal laws rather punish men when they have transgressed than form them to be such as should transgress seldomest, we may

conceive great hopes, through the showers of divine benediction watering the unmolested and watchful pains of the ministry, that the whole inheritance of God will grow up so straight and blameless, that the civil magistrate may, with far less toil and difficulty, and far more ease and delight, steer the tall and goodly vessel of the Commonwealth through all the gusts and tides of the world's mutability.

Of Reformation in England.

CIVIL LIBERTY DEFINED.

This is not the liberty which we can hope, that no grievance ever should arise in the Commonwealth, that let no man in this world expect; but when complaints are freely heard, deeply considered, and speedily reformed, then is the utmost bound of civil liberty attained that wise men look for.—*Areopagitica.*

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

In Athens, where books and wits were ever busier than in any other part of Greece, I find

but only two sorts of writings which the magistrate cared to take notice of; those either blasphemous and atheistical, or libellous; and this course was quick enough, as Cicero writes, to quell both the desperate wits of other atheists, and the open way of defaming, as the event showed. Of other sects and opinions, though tending to voluptuousness, and the denying of divine Providence, they took no heed. The Romans, for many ages, trained up only to a military roughness, resembling most the Lacedemonian guise, knew of learning little but what their twelve tables and the Pontific college, with their augurs and flamins, taught them in religion and law; so unacquainted with other learning, that when Carneades and Critolaus, with the stoic Diogenes, coming ambassadors to Rome, took thereby occasion to give the city a taste of their philosophy, they were suspected for seducers, by no less a man than Cato the Censor, who moved it in the Senate to dismiss them speedily, and to banish all such Attic babblers out of Italy. But Scipio, and others of the noblest senators, withstood him and his old Sabine austerity, and the Censor himself at last, in his old age, fell to the study of that whereof before he was so scrupulous.

And yet, at the same time, Nævius and Plautus, the first Latin comedians, had filled the city with all the borrowed scenes of Menander and Philemon. Then began to be considered what was to be done with libellous books and authors; for Nævius was quickly cast into prison for his unbridled pen, and released by the Tribunes upon his recantation: we read also that libels were burnt, and the makers punished by Augustus. From hence we shall meet with little else but tyranny in the Roman Empire, that we may not marvel if not so often bad as good books were silenced.

After the year 800, the Popes of Rome, engrossing what they pleased of political rule into their own hands, extended their dominion over men's eyes, as they had before over their judgments, burning and prohibiting to be read what they fancied not; yet sparing in their censures, and the books not many which they so dealt with; till Martin the Fifth, by his bull, not only prohibited, but was the first that excommunicated the reading of heretical books; for about that time, Wickliffe and Huss, growing terrible, were they who first drove the Papal Court to a

stricter policy of prohibiting. To fill up the measure of encroachment, their last invention was to ordain that no book, pamphlet, or paper should be printed (as if St. Peter had bequeathed them the keys of the Press also as well as of Paradise), unless it were approved and licensed under the hand of two or three gluttonous Friars.

And thus ye have the inventors, and the original of book licensing, ripped up and drawn as lineally as any pedigree. We have it not, that can be heard of, from any ancient state, or polity, or church, nor by any statute left us by our ancestors elder or later; nor from the modern custom of any reformed city or church abroad; but from the most Anti-Christian Council, and the most tyrannous Inquisition that ever enquired. Till then, books were as freely admitted into the world as any other birth; the issue of the brain was no more stifled than the issue of the womb! No envious Juno sat cross-legged over the nativity of any man's intellectual offspring; but if it proved a monster, who denies but that it was justly burnt, or sunk into the sea? But that a book, in a worse condition than a peccant soul, should be to stand before a jury ere it be

born to the world, and undergo, yet in darkness, the judgment of Radamanth and his colleagues,[1] ere it can pass the ferry backward into light, was never heard before till that mysterious iniquity, provoked and troubled at the first entrance of Reformation, sought out new limboes and new hells, wherein they might include our books also within the number of their damned.

Good and evil, we know, in the field of this world, grow up together, almost inseparably; and the knowledge is so involved and interwoven with the knowledge of evil, and in so many cunning resemblances hardly to be discerned, that those confused seeds which were imposed upon Psyche, as an incessant labour, to cull out and sort asunder, were not more intermixed. It was from out the rind of one apple tasted that the knowledge of good and evil, as two twins cleaving together, leaped forth into the world. And perhaps this is that doom which Adam fell into of knowing good and evil; that is to say, of knowing good by evil. As, therefore, the state of man now is, what wisdom can there be to choose, what continence to forbear,

[1] The fabulous Judges of Hell.

without the knowledge of evil? Since, therefore, the knowledge and survey of vice is in this world so necessary to the constituting of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity, than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason?

If we think to regulate printing, thereby to rectify manners, we must regulate all recreations and pastimes, all that is delightful to man. No music must be heard, no song be set or sung, but what is grave and doric. There must be licensing dancers, that no gesture, motion, or deportment be taught our youth but what, by their allowance, shall be thought honest; for such Plato was provided of. It will ask more than the work of twenty licensers to examine all the lutes, the violins, and the guitars in every house: they must not be suffered to prattle as they do, but must be licensed what they may say. And who shall silence all the airs and madrigals that whisper softness in chambers? The windows, also, and the balconies, must be thought on; there are shrewd books, with dangerous frontispieces, set to sale; who shall prohibit

them, shall twenty licensers? The villages, also, must have their visitors, to enquire what lectures the bagpipe and the rebeck reads,[2] even to the ballatry and the gamut of every municipal fiddler; for these are the countryman's Arcadias, and his Monte Mayors. Next, what more national corruption, for which England hears ill abroad, than household gluttony? Who shall be the rectors of our daily rioting? And what shall be done to inhibit the multitudes that frequent those houses where drunkenness is sold and harboured? Our garments also should be referred to the licensing of some more sober work-masters, to see them cut into a less wanton garb. Who shall regulate all the mixed conversations of our youth, male and female together, as is the fashion of this country? Who shall still appoint what shall be discoursed, what presumed, and no farther? Lastly, who shall forbid and separate all idle resort, all evil company?[3]

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[2] And the jocund rebeck sounds.—*L'Allegro.*

Rebeck, says Newton, from the French *rebec*, or the Italian *Rebbecca*, is a three-stringed fiddle. It appears from Sylvester's *Du Bartas* that the cymbal was furnished with wires, and the rebec with strings of cat-gut. In Shakspeare's Romeo and Juliet (Act IV. scene 5.) one of the musicians is called *Hugh Rebeck*.

[3] This arduous task was attempted by the Puritanical Reformers of the Long Parliament, who passed an act for preventing servant maids and apprentices from walking together in the fields on Sundays.

These things will be, and must be; but how they shall be least hurtful, how least enticing, herein consists the grave and governing wisdom of a State. To sequester out of the world into Atlantic and Eutopian politics, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evil, in the midst whereof God hath placed us unavoidably.

If, therefore, ye be loth to dishearten utterly and discontent, not the mercenary crew of false pretenders to learning, but the free and ingenuous sort of such as were evidently born to study and love learning for itself, not for lucre, or any other end but the service of God and of truth, and perhaps that lasting fame and perpetuity of praise which God and good men have consented shall be the reward of those whose published labours advance the good of mankind; then know, that so far to distrust the judgment and the honesty of one who hath but a common

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They also magnanimously voted down the May-pole, and laid a fine of five shillings per week upon every parish that was tardy in complying with the mandate. One of the arguments used by these "sage, grave men," for breaking the painted glass in church windows, was, because, by darkening the Church, it obscured the new light of the Gospel! Surely, if the Friars, "white, black, and gray," merited a place in the *Paradise of Fools*, some of the leading Puritans deserved a similar appropriate distinction.

repute in learning, and never yet offended, as not to count him fit to print his mind without a tutor and examiner, lest he should drop a schism, or something of corruption, is the greatest displeasure and indignity to a free and knowing spirit that can be put upon him.

What advantage is it to be a man, over it is to be a boy at school, if we have only escaped the ferula to come under the fescue of an Imprimatur? If serious and elaborate writings, as if they were no more than the theme of a grammar-lad under his pedagogue, must not be uttered without the cursory eyes of a temporizing and extemporizing licenser? He who is not trusted with his own actions, his drift not being known to be evil, and standing to the hazard of law and penalty, has no great argument to think himself reputed in the Commonwealth wherein he was born for other than a fool or a foreigner. When a man writes to the world, he summons up all his reason and deliberation to assist him, he searches, meditates, is industrious, and likely consults and confers with his judicious friends; after all which done, he takes himself to be informed in what he writes, as well as any that writ before him; if in this, the most consum-

mate act of his fidelity and ripeness, no years, no industry, no former proof of his abilities, can bring him to that state of maturity, as not to be still mistrusted and suspected, unless he carry all his considerate diligence, all his midnight watchings, and expence of Palladian oil, to the hasty view of an unleisured licenser, perhaps much his younger, perhaps far his inferior in judgment, perhaps one who never knew the labour of book-writing; and if he be not repulsed, or slighted, must appear in print like a puny with his guardian, and his censor's hand on the back of his title to be his bail and surety that he is no idiot or seducer, it cannot be but a dishonour and derogation to the author, to the book, to the privilege and dignity of learning. Nay, which is more lamentable, if the work of any deceased author, though never so famous in his life-time, and even to this day, comes to their hands for license to be printed, or reprinted, if there be found in his book one sentence of a venturous edge, uttered in the height of zeal, and who knows whether it might not be the dictate of a divine spirit? yet not suiting with every low decrepit humour of their own, though it were Knox himself, the reformer of a

kingdom, that spake it, they will not pardon him their dash; the sense of that great man shall to all posterity be lost, for the fearfulness or the presumptuous rashness of a perfunctory licenser.

And lest some should persuade ye, Lords and Commons, that these arguments of learned men's discouragement at this your order are mere flourishes, and not real, I could recount what I have heard and seen in other countries, where this kind of inquisition tyrannizes; where I have sat among their learned men (for that honour I had), and been counted happy to be born in such a place of philosophic freedom as they supposed England was, while themselves did nothing but bemoan the servile condition into which learning amongst them was brought; that this was it which had damped the glory of Italian wits; that nothing had been there written now these many years but flattery and fustian. There it was that I found and visited the famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought.[4]

4 Galileo, it is well known, was imprisoned for maintaining the principles of Copernicus, respecting the motion of the earth. He was even compelled to sign a renunciation of his heretical opinions: but the philosopher triumphed over the man. He *published* his dis-

And though I knew that England then was groaning loudest under the Prelatic yoke, nevertheless I took it as a pledge of future happiness, that other nations were so persuaded of her liberty. Yet was it beyond my hope that those worthies were then breathing in her air, who should be her leaders to such a deliverance as shall never be forgotten by any revolution of time that this world hath to finish. When that was once begun, it was as little in my fear, that what words of complaint I heard among learned men of other parts uttered against the Inquisition, the same I should hear by as learned men at home, uttered in time of Parliament, against an order of licensing; and that so generally, that, when I had disclosed myself a com-

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coveries, and was again committed to the Inquisition. He died in 1564, and, like Milton, died blind. It would be unpardonable to omit here the following beautiful allusions to the illustrious foreigner, however familiar they may be to the readers of Milton:—

> The broad circumference
> Hung on his shoulders, like the moon, whose orb,
> Through optic glass, the Tuscan artist views
> At evening, from the top of Fesole,
> Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
> Rivers or mountains, in her spotty globe.
>
> *Par. Lost*, Book I., l. 286.

> As when by night the glass
> Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
> Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon.
>
> *Ibid*, Book V. l. 261.

panion of their discontent, I might say (if without envy) that he whom an honest quæstorship had endeared to the Sicilians was not more by them importuned against Verres, than the favourable opinion which I had among many who honour ye, and are known and respected by ye, loaded me with entreaties and persuasions that I would not despair to lay together that which just reason should bring into my mind, toward the removal of an undeserved thraldom upon learning.

That this is not, therefore, the disburdening of a particular fancy, but the common grievance of all those who had prepared their minds and studies above the vulgar pitch, to advance truth in others, and from others to entertain it, thus much may satisfy. And in their name, I shall for neither friend nor foe conceal what the general murmur is,—that, if it come to Inquisitioning again, and licensing; and that we are so timorous of ourselves, and so suspicious of all men, as to fear each book, and the shaking of every leaf, before we know what the contents are; if some who but of late were little better than silenced from preaching, shall come now to silence us from reading, except what they please,

it cannot be guessed what is intended by some but a second tyranny over Learning; and will soon put it out of controversy that Bishop and Presbyters are the same to us, both name and thing.[5]

When a man hath been labouring the hardest labour in the deep mines of knowledge, hath furnished out his findings in all their equipage, drawn forth his reasons, as it were a battle ranged, scattered and defeated all objections in his way, calls out his adversary into the plain, offers him the advantage of wind and sun, if he please, only that he may try the matter by dint of argument: for his opponents then to skulk, to lay ambushments, to keep a narrow bridge of licensing where the challenger should pass, though it be valour enough in soldiership, is but weakness and cowardice in the wars of truth.

No man who hath tasted learning but will confess the many ways of profiting by those who, not contented with stale receipts, are able to manage and set forth new positions to the

5 In his diatribe on "the forcers of Conscience under the Long Parliament," supposed to have been written in the following year, though not published till 1673, Milton says plainly, what indeed was sufficiently obvious, that

New Presbyter was but old Priest writ large.

world. And were they but as the dust and cinders of our feet, so long as in that notion they may yet serve to polish and brighten the armoury of Truth, even for that respect they were not utterly to be cast away. But if they be of those whom God hath fitted for the special use of these times with eminent and ample gifts, and those perhaps neither among the Priests nor among the Pharisees, and we, in the lust of a precipitant zeal, shall make no distinction, but resolve to stop their mouths, because we fear they come with new and dangerous opinions, as we commonly fore-judge them ere we understand them, no less than woe to us, while thinking thus to defend the Gospel, we are found the persecutors.[6]—*Areopagitica.*

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6 Milton's eloquent unanswerable Appeal produced no immediate effect upon the Parliament. The practice of licensing continued till 1649; when one Gilbert Mabbot, who held the office, was discharged of the employment at his own request, backed with four reasons:—1. Because his authority had been affronted, by printing several books without his license. 2. Because, in the ends of its first institution it was illegal, being designed to stop the Press against Popery, Episcopacy, and Tyranny. 3. Because it is a monopoly. 4. Because he thought it lawful to print any book without licensing, if the author subscribed his true name, so as to be answerable for the contents, if punishable by the law. A Committee of the Council of State being satisfied with these and other reasons, report it to the Council, and the Council to the House; who thereupon ordered the discharge, May 22d of that year.—*Birch's Life of Milton*, p. xxx. *Biog. Britan.* Vol. V. p. 3112.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF LORD BROOKE.

What would be best advised then, if it be found so hurtful and so unequal to suppress opinions, for the newness or the unsuitableness to a customary acceptance, will not be my task to say; I shall only repeat what I have learned from one of your own honourable number, a right noble and pious lord, who, had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the Church and Commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him, I am sure; yet I, for honour's sake, and may it be eternal to him, shall name him, the Lord Brooke. He, writing of Episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honoured regard with ye, so full of meekness and breathing charity, that, next to His last testament who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear

with patience and humility those, however they be miscalled, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and dedicated to the Parliament by him, who, both for his life and for his death, deserves that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal.[1]—*Ibid.*

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[1] Sparing of his praise as Milton generally was, this elegant and tender tribute to the memory of the celebrated Parliamentary General is peculiarly entitled to our regard. Lord Brooke was killed in 1642, by a shot fired from St. Chad's cathedral, Litchfield, which city he had taken possession of in the name of the Parliament. He was cased in complete armour, but was shot through the eye by a random ball. Lord Brooke was a zealous Puritan, and had once said he hoped to see with his eyes the ruin of all the cathedrals in England. In consequence of this remark, it was observed by the superstitious Royalists, that he was killed on St. Chad's day, by a shot from St. Chad's cathedral, which pierced that very eye by which he hoped to see the ruin of all cathedrals!—See *Dugdale*, *Clarendon*, and *Hume*.

Sir Walter Scott, with his usual felicity in embodying the *minutiæ* of history into his popular romances, has alluded to the death of Lord Brooke in his poem of Marmion: Describing the interment of his hero in "moated Litchfield's lofty pile," he adds:—

> A tomb, with Gothic sculpture fair,
> Did long Lord Marmion's image bear.
> Now vainly for its scite you look;
> 'Twas levell'd when fanatic Brooke
> The fair Cathedral storm'd and took;
> But, thanks to Heaven, and good Saint Chad,
> A guerdon meet the spoiler had!

The work so highly praised by Milton, and which is now extremely rare, is entitled, "A Discourse opening the Nature of that Episco-

MILTON'S MOTIVES FOR WRITING IN DEFENCE OF THE CHURCH.

For me, I have determined to lay up, as the best treasure and solace of a good old age, if

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pacy which is exercised in England: wherein, with all humility, are represented some Considerations tending to the much-desired Peace, and long-expected Reformation, of this our Mother Church. By the Right Hon. Robert Lord Brooke; London, 1641." It is certainly superior to the general run of the Puritanical publications, and, what was then a rare merit, abounds fully as much in classical as in scriptural quotations. The noble author is severe enough on the order of Bishops, but is equally averse to those who believed themselves possessed of "a call" from Heaven to preach. He is hardest upon the "*Family of Love*," the "*Antinomians* or *Grindletonians*," whom he shrewdly suspects to be the heretics whom Timothy foretold should come in the last days, and in perilous times. The concluding portion of the work, alluded to by our author, as favouring his enlightened opinions on the subject of Toleration, is unquestionably the best:—

"I take not on me," says the noble Lord, "to warrant all the paths which some cut out to themselves; yet I most affectionately intreat men not to contemn all things in those they now brand with their usual stain of *Separatism*, which phrase many use in such scorn, as if with one stab of that Italian dagger they could run through body and soul at once.

"Light was one of the first creatures, and yet not perfected till the fourth day, and perhaps not fully then. So was spiritual light, the beginning of the Reformation, that new Creation, yet it was not perfect at first dawning, but increaseth still by degrees, till it have quite chased away darkness, and there be no more night. At the first, rising out of Popery, the churchless church of the *Albigenses* and *Waldenses* (holy, good men) began an admirable reformation: this was much advanced by Jerome of Prague, and John Huss. Luther had many gross errors, yet must not lose his place among these glorious lights. After these appeareth Calvin, shining yet brighter both in doctrine and discipline. Since then our God hath raised up a more glorious light among these Northern Isles; and yet some went from us lately with a candle burning, brighter perhaps than ours, though it were lighted here. Thus light, dilating and enlarging itself, seemeth to

God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of free speech from my youth, where I shall think it available in so dear a concernment as the Church's good.[1]

By this little diligence, mark what a privilege I have gained with good men and saints, to claim my right of lamenting the tribulations of the Church, if she should suffer, when others, that have ventured nothing for her sake, have not the honour to be admitted mourners. But if she lift up her drooping head and prosper, among those that have something more than wished her welfare, I have my charter and freehold of rejoicing to me and my heirs. Concerning, therefore, this wayward subject against

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become more pure, more light, more glorious: and yet it seems not to be noon.

"Can we not dissent in judgment (especially in these lower points of discipline, while we agree in doctrine) but we must also disagree in affection? A hard case. We never prove ourselves true members of Christ more than when we embrace his members with most enlarged yet straitest affections. To this end, God assisting me, my desire, prayer, endeavour shall still be, as much as in me lies, to follow peace and holiness; and though there may haply be some little dissent between my dark judgment, weak conscience, and other good men, that are much more clear and strong, yet my prayer shall still be, to *keep the Spirit in the bond of Peace*. And as many as walk after this rule, peace, I hope, shall still be on them, and the whole Israel of God."

1 This sentiment, so characteristic of the poet, he repeats still more emphatically in *Areopagitica*: "Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties."

Prelaty, the touching whereof is so distasteful and disquietous to a number of men, as, by what hath been said, I may deserve of charitable readers to be credited, that neither envy nor gall hath entered me upon this controversy, but the enforcement of conscience only, and a preventive fear lest the omitting of this duty should be against me when I would store up to myself the good provision of peaceful hours.

But were it the meanest under-service, if God by his secretary Conscience enjoin it, it were sad for me if I should draw back: for me especially, now when all men offer their aid to help, ease, and lighten the difficult labours of the Church, to whose service, by the intentions of my parents and friends, I was destined of a child, and in mine own resolutions; till, coming to some maturity of years, and perceiving what tyranny had invaded the Church, that he who would take orders must subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that would reach, he must either straight perjure or split his faith: I thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the sacred office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing.—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

HIS MORNING OCCUPATIONS.

[As the two following extracts refer solely to Milton's personal character and pursuits, it may be necessary to repeat that they were induced by the attacks of an opponent, and were not voluntarily obtruded upon the public. His severe animadversions upon Hall's Remonstrance called forth a reply from the son of the Bishop—a "Modest Confutation of a late scurrilous Libel." Had he contented himself with fairly confuting the arguments of Milton, every one must have applauded his motives; but, instead of acting this manly part, he has basely insinuated charges against the private character of the poet, belied by the whole tenor of his life, and utterly and entirely false. A strong vantage-ground was thus afforded the poet, and in his reply he has not failed to avail himself of it.]

"And where my morning haunts are he wisses not." I'll tell him.

Those morning haunts are where they should be, at home; not sleeping, or concocting the surfeits of an irregular feast, but up and stirring; in winter, often ere the sound of any bell awaken men to labour or to devotion: in summer, as oft with the bird that first rouses, or not much tardier, to read good authors, or cause them to be read, till the attention be weary, or memory have its full fraught: then with useful and generous labours preserving the body's health and

hardiness, to render lightsome, clear, and not lumpish obedience to the mind, the cause of religion, and our country's liberty, when it shall require firm hearts in sound bodies to stand and cover their stations, rather than to see the ruin of our Protestation, and enforcement of a slavish life.[1]—*Apology for Smectymnuus.*

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1 ——— His sleep
Was airy light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills (Aurora's fan)
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough.

Par. Lost, Book V. l. 3.

——— And now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song!
As lightly from his grassy couch uprose
Our Saviour.

Par. Regained, Book II. l. 279.

The exquisite pictures of Morning, scattered with so rich and prodigal a hand throughout the various works of Milton, shew that in early life his morning studies had not always been confined to his chamber. He had perused Nature, not as Dryden happily expresses it, through the spectacles of books, but like the cheerful man in his own inimitable poem, while

——— Walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light.

L'Allegro.

DEFENDS HIS CHARACTER, AND DESCRIBES HIS YOUTHFUL STUDIES.

But because, as well by this upbraiding to me the *bordelloes* (brothels), as by other suspicious glancings in his book, he would seem privily to point me out to his readers as one whose custom of life were not honest, but licentious; I shall entreat to be borne with, though I digress, and in a way not often trod, acquaint ye with the sum of my thoughts in this matter, through the course of my years and studies.

I had my time, readers, as others have who have good learning bestowed upon them, to be sent to those places where the opinion was, it might be soonest attained; and, as the manner is, was not unstudied in those authors which are most commended; whereof some were grave orators and historians, whose matter methought I loved indeed, but as my age then was, so I understood them; others were the smooth, elegiac poets, whereof the schools are not scarce, whom both for the pleasing sound of their numerous writings (which in imitation I found most easy, and most agreeable to Nature's part in me) and for their matter, which what it is there be

few who know not, I was so allured to read, that no recreation came to me better welcome; for that it was then those years with me which are excused, though they be least severe, I may be saved the labour to remember ye. Whence having observed them to account it the chief glory of their wit, in that they were ablest to judge, to praise, and by that could esteem themselves worthiest to love those high perfections which under one or other name they took to celebrate; I thought with myself by every instinct and presage of nature, which is not wont to be false, that what emboldened them to this task might, with such diligence as they used, embolden me, and that what judgment, wit, or elegance was my share, would herein best appear, and best value itself, by how much more wisely, and with more love of virtue, I should choose (let rude ears be absent) the object of not unlike praises: for albeit those thoughts to some will seem virtuous and commendable, to others only pardonable, to a third sort, perhaps, idle; yet the mentioning of them now will end in serious. Nor blame it, readers, in those years to propose to themselves such a reward as the noblest dispositions above other things in this life have

sometimes preferred: whereof not to be sensible, when good and fair in one person meet, argues both a gross and shallow judgment, and withal an ungentle and swainish breast. For by the firm settling of these persuasions I became, to my best memory, such a proficient, that if I found those authors anywhere speaking unworthy things of themselves, or unchaste of those names which before they had extolled, this effect it wrought with me, from that time forward their art I still applauded, but the men I deplored: and above them all preferred the two famous renowners of *Beatrice* and *Laura*,[1] who never write but honour of them to whom they devote their verse, displaying sublime and pure thoughts without transgression.

And long it was not after, when I was confirmed in this opinion, that he who would not be frustrate of his hope to write well hereafter in laudable things, ought himself to be a true poem—that is, a composition and pattern of the best and honourablest things; not presuming to sing high praises of heroic men or famous cities, unless he have in himself the experience and

[1] Dante and Petrarch.

practice of all that is praiseworthy. These reasonings, together with a certain niceness of nature, an honest haughtiness, and self-esteem, either of what I was, or what I might be (which let Envy call pride), and lastly that modesty whereof, though not in the title-page,[2] yet here I may be excused to make some seeming profession: all these uniting the supply of their natural aid together, kept me still above those low descents of mind, beneath which he must deject and plunge himself that can agree to saleable and unlawful prostitutions.

Next—for hear me out now, readers, that I may tell ye whither my younger feet wandered—I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount, in solemn Cantos, the deeds of knighthood, founded by our victorious kings, and from hence had in renown over all Christendom. There I read it in the oath of every knight that he should defend, to the expence of his best blood, or of his life, if it so befel him, the honour and chastity of virgin or matron: from whence, even then, I learned

2 Milton's opponent, Hall, it will be recollected, had styled his reply "A *Modest* Confutation;" *his* modesty, however, is only to be found in the title-page.

what a noble virtue Chastity sure must be,[3] to the defence of which so many worthies, by such a dear adventure of themselves, had sworn; and if I found in the story afterward any of them by word or deed breaking that oath, I judged it the same fault of the poet as that which is attributed to Homer, to have written indecent things of the gods: only this my mind gave me, that every free and gentle spirit, without that oath, ought to be born a knight, nor needed to expect the gilt

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3 ——— Shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece,
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair, silver-shafted Queen, for ever chaste!
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain pard; but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was Queen o' th' woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore—unconquered virgin!
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity,
That where a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried Angels lacquey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear,
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal.

Masque of Comus, l. 442.

spur or the laying of a sword upon his shoulder, to stir him up, both by his counsel and his arm, to secure and protect the weakness of any attempted chastity. So that even these books, which to many others have been the fuel of wantonness and loose living; I cannot think how, unless by divine indulgence, proved to me so many incitements, as you have heard, to the love and steadfast observation of that virtue which abhors the society of bordelloes.

Thus from the laureate fraternity of poets, riper years, and the ceaseless round of study and reading, led me to the shady spaces of Philosophy: but chiefly to the divine volumes of Plato, and his equal Xenophon,[4] where, if I should tell

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4 Behold
Where on the Egean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil,
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits,
Or hospitable in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades;
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees industrious murmur oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls then view
The schools of ancient sages; his who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world.

To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heaven descended to the low-roof'd house

ye what I learned of chastity and love—I mean that which is trûly so, whose charming cup is only virtue, which she bears in her hand to those who are worthy (the rest are cheated with a thick intoxicating potion, which a certain sorceress, the abuser of Love's name, carries about[5]) and how the first and chiefest office of love begins and ends in the soul, producing those happy twins of her divine generation, knowledge and virtue, with such abstracted sublimities as these, it might be worth your listening, readers, as I may hope to have ye in a still time, when there shall be no chiding; not in these noises, the adversary, as ye know, barking at the door, or searching for me.

Last of all, not in time, but as perfection is

Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom, well-inspired, the Oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams that water'd all the schools.
Par. Regained, Book IV. l. 237.

The reader need scarcely be reminded that both Plato and Xenophon derived their philosophy from Socrates.

5 In this passage Milton seems to have remembered Circe, with her "charmed cup," and his own *Comus*:—

Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus, which as they taste,
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form.

last, that care was ever had of me, with my earliest capacity, not to be negligently trained in the precepts of the Christian Religion: this, that I have hitherto related, hath been to show that, though Christianity had been but slightly taught me, yet a certain reservedness of natural disposition, and moral discipline learned out of the noblest philosophy, was enough to keep me in disdain of far less incontinences than this of the bordello. But, having had the doctrine of Holy Scripture, unfolding those chaste and high mysteries, with timeliest care infused that "the body is for the Lord, and the Lord for the body," thus also, I argued to myself, that if unchastity in a woman, whom St. Paul terms the glory of man, be such a scandal and dishonour, then certainly in a man, who is both the image and glory of God, it must, though commonly not so thought, be much more deflowering and dishonourable, in that he sins both against his own body which is the perfecter sex, and his own glory which is in the woman, and that which is worst, against the image and glory of God which is in himself. Nor did I slumber over that place, expressing such high rewards of ever accompanying the Lamb, with those

celestial songs, to others incomprehensible, but not to those who were not defiled with women, which doubtless means fornication: for marriage must not be called a defilement.[6] Thus large I have purposely been that if I have been justly taxed with this crime, it may come upon me, after all this my confession, with a tenfold shame; but, if I have hitherto deserved no such opprobrious word, or suspicion, I may hereby engage myself now openly to the faithful observation of what I have professed.—*Ibid.*

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6 1. And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred, forty, and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from earth.

4. These are they which were not defiled with women: for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb.

Revelation of St. John, chap. xiv.

The poet's mind seems to have been completely stored with the imagery of this most poetical of all the Books of the New Testament.

NOT NATURALLY INCLINED TO POLEMICAL WRITING.

Lest it should still be imputed to me, as I have found it hath been, that some self-pleasing humour of vain-glory hath incited me to contest with men of high estimation, now while green years are upon my head; from this needless surmisal I shall hope to dissuade the intelligent and equal auditor, if I can but say successfully that which in this exigent behoves me; although I would be heard only, if it might be, by the elegant and learned reader, to whom principally for a while I shall beg leave I may address myself. To him it will be no new thing, though I tell him that if I hunted after praise by the ostentation of wit and learning, I should not write thus out of mine own season, when I have neither yet completed to my mind the full circle of my private studies, although I complain not of any insufficiency to the matter in hand; or, were I ready to my wishes, it were a folly to commit any thing elaborately composed to the careless and interrupted listening of these tumultuous times. Next, if I were wise only to my

own ends, I would certainly take such a subject as of itself might catch applause, whereas this hath all the disadvantages on the contrary, and such a subject as the publishing whereof might be delayed at pleasure, and time enough to pencil it over with all the curious touches of art, even to the perfection of a faultless picture; whereas in this argument the not deferring is of great moment to the good speeding, that, if solidity have leisure to do her office, art cannot have much. Lastly, I should not choose this manner of writing, wherein knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account, but of my left hand.—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

MEDITATES THE COMPOSITION OF SOME GREAT WORK IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

Although a poet, soaring in the high region of his fancies, with his garland and singing robes about him, might, without apology, speak more of himself than I mean to do, yet for me,

sitting here below in the cool element of prose, a mortal thing among many readers of no empyreal conceit, to venture and divulge unusual things of myself, I shall petition to the gentler sort, it may not be envy to me. I must say, therefore, that after I had for my first years, by the ceaseless diligence and care of my father (whom God recompense!) been exercised to the tongues, and some sciences, as my age would suffer, by sundry masters and teachers, both at home and at the schools, it was found that whether aught was imposed me by them that had the overlooking, or betaken to of mine own choice, in English or other tongue, prosing or versing, but chiefly this latter, the style, by certain vital signs it had, was likely to live. But much latelier, in the private academies of Italy, whither I was favoured to resort, perceiving that some trifles which I had in memory composed at under twenty, or thereabout (for the manner is, that every one must give some proof of his wit and reading there), met with acceptance above what was looked for; and other things which I had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences, to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums,

which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps; I began thus to assent both to them and divers of my friends here at home, and not less to an inward prompting, which now grew daily upon me, that by labour and intense study, which I take to be my portion in this life, joined with the strong propensity of nature, I might perhaps leave something so written to after-times, as they should not willingly let it die.

These thoughts at once possessed me, and these other; that if I were certain to write, as men buy leases, for three lives and downwards, there ought no regard be sooner had than to God's glory, by the honour and instruction of my country. For which cause, and not only for that I knew it would be hard to arrive at the second rank among the Latins, I applied myself to that resolution, which Ariosto followed against the persuasions of Bembo, to fix all the industry and art I could unite to the adorning of my native tongue; not to make verbal curiosities the end (that were a toilsome vanity), but to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things, among mine own citizens throughout this island, in the mother-dialect. That what

the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above, of being a Christian, might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world; whose fortune hath hitherto been, that, if the Athenians, as some say, made their small deeds great and renowned by their eloquent writers, England hath had her noble achievements made small by the unskilful handling of monks and mechanics.—*Ibid.*

PROPOSES A VARIETY OF SUBJECTS.

Time serves not now, and perhaps I might seem too profuse to give any certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting; whether that Epic form whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief model; or whether the rules of Aristotle

herein are to be strictly kept, or nature to be followed, which, in them that know art and use judgment is no transgression, but an enriching of art; and lastly what king or knight before the Conquest might be chosen, in whom to lay the pattern of a Christian hero. And, as Tasso gave to a Prince of Italy his choice whether he would command him to write of Godfrey's expedition against the Infidels, or Belisarius against the Goths, or Charlemain against the Lombards; if to the instinct of nature and the emboldening of art aught may be trusted, and that there be nothing adverse in our climate, or the fate of this age, it haply would be no rashness, from an equal diligence and inclination, to present the like offer in our ancient stories; or whether those dramatic constitutions, wherein Sophocles and Euripedes reign, shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation.

The Scripture also affords us a divine Pastoral drama, in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges. And the Apocalypse of St. John is the majestic image of a high and stately tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her

solemn scenes and acts with a seven-fold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies. And this my opinion, the grave authority of Pareus, commenting that book, is sufficient to confirm.

Or if occasion shall lead to imitate those magnific odes and hymns, wherein Pindarus and Callimachus are in most things worthy, some others in their frame judicious, in their matter most an end faulty. But those frequent songs throughout the Law and the Prophets, beyond all these, not in their divine argument alone, but in the very critical art of composition, may be easily made appear, over all the kinds of lyric Poesy to be incomparable. These abilities, wheresoever they be found, are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed, but yet to some (though most abuse) in every nation; and are of power, beside the office of a pulpit, to inbreed and cherish, in a great people, the seeds of virtue and public civility, to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune, to celebrate, in glorious and lofty hymns, the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works and what he suffers to be wrought, with high providence in his Church;

to sing victorious agonies of martyrs and saints, the deeds and triumphs of just and pious nations, doing valiantly through faith against the enemies of Christ; to deplore the general relapses of kingdoms and states from justice and God's true worship.

Lastly, whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration in all the changes of that which is called fortune from without, or the wily subtleties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things, with a solid and treatable smoothness to paint out and describe, teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon truth herself, unless they see her elegantly dressed; that whereas the paths of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.—*Ibid.*

PROMISES TO UNDERTAKE THE TASK.

The thing which I had to say, and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself any thing worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath plucked from me, by an abortive and foredated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure may extend. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the fumes of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal

Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.[1] To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs; till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own cost and peril, I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them.[2] Although

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1 And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out his sacred altar touched with hallowed fire.
Hymn on the Nativity.

The original is in Scripture:—

5. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts.

6. Then flew one of the Seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar:

7. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged.
Isaiah, Chap. VI.

Pope has availed himself of this striking image, in the invocation to his Messiah:—

O thou my voice inspire
Who touched *Isaiah's* hallow'd lips with fire!

2 "From a promise like this," says Dr. Johnson, "at once fervid, pious, and rational, might be expected the *Paradise Lost*." Twenty-five years, however,—more than a third part of the average life of man—had elapsed ere the poet redeemed his pledge: so long and steadfastly, amidst the tumults of the times, had he kept "his constant

it nothing content me to have disclosed thus much before-hand, but that I trust hereby to make it manifest with what small willingness I endure to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes

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mind," and cherished the seeds whose fruit was destined for immortality!

> Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
> Nor in the glistering foil
> Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,
> But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes
> And perfect witness of all-judging Jove.
>
> *Lycidas.*

Of the motives which swayed the poet to the choice of the Fall of Man, as the subject of his great Epic, he has afforded us a sort of negative testimony:—

> Since first this subject for heroic song
> Pleas'd me, long chusing and beginning late;
> Not sedulous by nature to indite
> Wars, hitherto the only argument
> Heroic deem'd; chief mastery to dissect
> With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
> In battles feigned: (the better fortitude
> Of patience and heroic martyrdom,
> Unsung) or to describe races and games,
> Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,
> Impresses quaint, caparisons, and steeds;
> Bases, and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
> At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
> Served up in all with sewers and seneschals;
> The skill of artifice, or office mean:
> Not that which justly gives heroic name
> To person or to poem. Me (of these
> Not skill'd nor studious) higher argument
> Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
> That name, unless an age too late, or cold
> Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
> Depress'd: and much they may, if all be mine,
> Not her's, who brings it nightly to my ear.
>
> *Par. Lost*, Book IX. l. 25.

than these, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes, put from beholding the bright countenance of Truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies.—*Ibid.*

NATIONAL SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

Because the spirit of man cannot demean itself lively in this body, without some recreating intermission of labour and serious things, it were happy for the Commonwealth if our magistrates, as in those famous governments of old, would take into their care not only the deciding of our contentious law cases and brawls, but the managing of our public sports and festival pastimes, that they might be not such as were authorized a while since, the provocations of drunkenness and lust, but such as may inure and harden our bodies, by martial exercises, to all warlike skill and performance; and may civilize, adorn, and make discreet our minds by the learned and affable meeting of frequent academies, and the procurement of wise and artful recitations,

sweetened with eloquent and graceful incitements to the love and practice of justice, temperance, and fortitude, instructing and bettering the nation at all opportunities, that the call of wisdom and virtue may be heard every where, as Solomon saith, "She crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets, in the top of high places, in the chief concourse, and in the openings of the gates."[1] Whether this may not be not only in pulpits, but after another persuasive method, at set and solemn paneguries in theatres, porches, or what other place or way may win most upon the people, to receive at once both recreation and instruction, let them in authority consult.[2]—*Ibid.*

PANEGYRICAL ADDRESS TO CROMWELL.

Proceed then, O Cromwell, and exhibit, under every circumstance, the same loftiness of mind:

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1 Proverbs, Chap. VIII. v. 23.

2 The bold imagination of Milton has, in some measure, realized this idea, in describing the *sports* of the Angels.—

> About him exercis'd heroic games
> Th' unarm'd youth of Heaven; but nigh at hand
> Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears
> Hung high. *Par. Lost*, Book IV. l. 551.

for it well becomes you, and is consistent with your greatness. The deliverer, as you are, of your country, the author, the guardian, the preserver of her liberty, you can assume no additional character more important or more august, since not only the actions of our kings, but the fabled exploits of our heroes, are overcome by your achievements. Reflect then frequently (how dear alike the trust and the parent from whom you have received it!), that to your hands your country has commended and confided her freedom; that what she lately expected from her choicest representatives, she now hopes exclusively from you. O remember this high confidence, this hope of your country, relying exclusively upon yourself; reverence the countenances and the wounds of those brave men who have so nobly struggled for liberty under your auspices, as well as the manes of those who have fallen in the conflict; reverence also the opinion and the discourse of foreign communities; their lofty anticipations with respect to our freedom, so valiantly obtained to our republic, so gloriously established, of which the speedy extinction would involve us in the deepest and most unexampled infamy; reverence, finally, yourself! and

suffer not that liberty, for the attainment of which you have encountered so many hardships, to sustain any violation from your own hands, or any from those of others. Without our freedom, in fact, you cannot yourself be free: for it is justly ordained by nature, that he who invades the liberty of others shall, in the very outset, lose his own, and be the first to feel that servitude which he has induced. But if the very patron, the tutelar Deity, as it were, of freedom;—if the man most eminent for justice, and sanctity, and general excellence, should assail that liberty which he has asserted, the issue must necessarily be pernicious, if not fatal, not only to the aggressor, but to the entire system and interests of Piety herself; honour and virtue would indeed appear to be empty names; the credit and character of religion would decline and perish under a wound more deep than any which, since the first transgression, had been inflicted on the race of man.

You have engaged in a most arduous undertaking, which will search you to the quick; which will scrutinize you through and through; which will bring to the severest test your spirit, your energy, your stability; which will ascertain

whether you are really actuated by that living piety, and honour, and equity and moderation, which seem, with the favour of God, to have raised you to your present high dignity. To rule with you counsels three mighty realms; in the place of their erroneous institutions to introduce a sounder system of doctrine and of discipline, to pervade their remotest provinces with unremitting attention and anxiety, vigilance and foresight; to decline no labours, to yield to no blandishments of pleasure, to spurn the pageantries of wealth and of power—these are difficulties in comparison with which those of war are the mere levities of play: these will sift and winnow you; these demand a man sustained by the divine assistance, tutored and instructed almost by a personal communication with his God. These, and more than these, you often, as I doubt not, revolve in your mind, and make the subjects of your deepest meditation, greatly solicitous how most happily they may be achieved, and your country's freedom be strengthened and secured: and these objects you cannot, in my judgment, otherwise effect than by admitting, as you do, to an intimate share of your counsels, those men who have already participated your

toils and your dangers;—men of the utmost moderation, integrity, and valour; not rendered savage or austere by the sight of so much blood-shed, and of so many forms of death; but inclined to justice, to the reverence of the Deity, to a sympathy with human suffering, and animated for the preservation of liberty, with a zeal strengthened by the hazards which for its sake they have encountered: men not raked together from the dregs of our own or of a foreign populace—not a band of mercenary adventurers, but men chiefly of superior condition; in extraction noble or respectable; with respect to property, considerable or competent, or in some instances deriving a stronger claim to our regard even from their poverty itself: men not convened by the lust of plunder, but in times of extraordinary difficulty, amidst circumstances generally doubtful, and often almost desperate, excited to vindicate their country from oppression, and prompt, not only in the safety of the senate-house, to wage the war of words, but to join battle with the enemy in the field. If we will then renounce the idleness of never-ending and fallacious expectation, I see not in whom, if not in these, and in such as these, we can place reli-

ance or trust. Of their FIDELITY we have the surest and most indisputable proof in the readiness which they have discovered even to die, if it had been their lot, in the cause of their country; of their PIETY, in the devotion with which, having repeatedly and successfully implored the protection of heaven, they uniformly ascribed the glory to Him from whom they had solicited the victory; of their JUSTICE, in not exempting even their King from trial, or from execution; of their MODERATION, in our own experience, and in the certainty that, if their violence should disturb the peace which they have established, they would themselves be the first to feel the resulting mischief, themselves would receive the first wounds in their own bodies, while they were again doomed to struggle for all their fortunes and honours now happily secured; of their FORTITUDE, lastly, in that none ever recovered their liberty with more bravery or effect, to give us the assurance that none will ever watch over it with more solicitous attention and care.

Defensio Secunda.

[The translation is by one of our most accomplished scholars, the Rev. Archdeacon Wrangham, by whom it was communicated to Dr. Symmons, for insertion in his Life of Milton. Classical quotations would be out of

place in a popular work like the present; and as the object of the Editor has been to let Milton speak in his own language—that language to which he was willing to trust his fame, and which he has done so much to adorn and perpetuate—the above is the only translation that will be found in this volume.]

REPUBLICAN ZEAL.

With all hazard, I have ventured what I thought my duty to speak in season, and to forewarn my country in time. What I have spoken is the language of that which is called not amiss *the good old cause.* Thus much I should perhaps have said, though I were sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones; and had none to cry to, but with the prophet, *O, Earth, Earth!* to tell the very soil itself what her perverse inhabitants are deaf to. Nay, though what I have spoke should happen (which Thou suffer not, who didst create mankind free, nor Thou, next, who didst redeem us from being servants of men!) to be the last words of our expiring liberty. But I trust I shall have spoken persuasion to abundance of sensible and ingenuous men; to some, perhaps, whom God may raise to these stones to become children of reviving liberty;

and may reclaim; though they seem now chusing them, a captain back for Egypt, to bethink themselves a little, and consider, whither they are rushing; to exhort this torrent also of the people, not to be so impetuous, but to keep their channel.—*Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth.*

THE BEGINNING OF NATIONS.

The beginning of nations, those excepted of whom sacred books have spoken, is to this day unknown. Nor only the beginning, but the deeds also of many succeeding ages, yea, periods of ages, either wholly unknown, or obscured and blemished with fables. Whether it were that the use of letters came in long after, or were it the violence of barbarous inundations, or they themselves at certain revolutions of time fatally decaying, and degenerating into sloth and ignorance; whereby the monuments of more ancient civility have been some destroyed, some lost. Perhaps disesteem and contempt of the public affairs then present, as not worth recording, might partly be in cause. Certainly oft-times

we see that wise men, and of best abilities, have forborne to write the acts of their own days, while they beheld, with a just loathing and disdain, not only how unworthy, how perverse, how corrupt, but often how ignoble, how petty, how below all history the persons and the actions were; who, either by fortune, or some rude election, had attained, as a sore judgment and ignominy upon the land, to have chief sway in managing the Commonwealth. But that any law or superstition of our old philosophers, the Druids, forbad the Britons to write their memorable deeds, I know not why any out of Cæsar should allege: he indeed saith that their doctrine they thought not lawful to commit to letters; but in most matters else, both private and public, among which well may History be recorded, they used the Greek tongue: and that the British Druids, who taught those in Gaul, would be ignorant of any language known and used by their disciples, or so frequently writing other things, and so inquisitive into highest, would, for want of recording, be ever children in the knowledge of times and ages, is not likely. Whatever might be the reason, this we find, that of British affairs, from the first peopling of

the island to the coming of Julius Cæsar, nothing certain, either by tradition, history, or ancient fame, hath hitherto been left us. That which we have of oldest seeming hath, by the greater part of judicious antiquaries, been long rejected for a modern fable. Nevertheless, seeing that oft-times relations heretofore accounted fabulous have been after found to contain in them many footsteps and relics of something true, as what we read in poets of the Flood and Giants, little believed till undoubted witnesses taught us that all was not feigned, I have therefore determined to bestow the telling over even of these reputed tales: be it for nothing else but in favour of our English poets and rhetoricians, who by their art will know how to use them judiciously.[1]

[In accordance with this determination, he gives the fabulous chronicle of Geoffrey of Monmouth, on concluding which he beautifully adds:]

Thus far, though leaning only on the credit of Geoffrey Monmouth and his assertors, I yet, for the specified causes, have thought it not

1 Few, however, with the skill of the author himself, who, when writing his *Comus*, transplanted the beautiful story of Sabrina, "virgin daughter of Locrine," from these ancient Chronicles.

beneath my purpose to relate what I found. Whereto I neither oblige the belief of other person, nor over-hastily subscribe mine own. Nor have I stood with others, computing or collating years and chronologies, lest I should be vainly curious about the time and circumstance of things whereof the substance is so much in doubt. By this time, like one who had set out on his way by night, and travelled through a region of smooth or idle dreams, our history now arrives on the confines, where daylight and truth meet us with a clear dawn, representing to our view, though at a far distance, true colours and shapes.

History of Britain.

EXPIRATION OF THE ROMAN POWER IN BRITAIN.

Thus expired this great empire of the Romans; first in Britain, soon after in Italy itself: having borne chief sway in this island (though never thoroughly subdued, or all at once in subjection), if we reckon from the coming in of Julius to the taking of Rome by Alaric, in which year Honorius wrote those letters of discharge into Britain,

the space of four hundred and sixty-two years. And with the empire fell also what before in this Western World was chiefly Roman, Learning, Valour, Eloquence, History, Civility, and even Language itself—all these together, as it were with equal pace, diminishing and decaying. Henceforth we are to steer by another sort of authors, near enough to the times they write, as in their own country, if that would serve, in time not much belated, some of equal age, in expression barbarous; and to say how judicious I suspend a while. This we must expect; in civil matters to find them dubious relators, and still to the best advantage of what they term Mother Church, meaning indeed themselves; in most other matters of religion blind, astonished, and strook with superstition as with a planet; in one word, Monks. Yet these guides, where can be had no better, must be followed; in gross it may be true enough; in circumstance each man, as his judgment gives him, may reserve his faith or bestow it.[1]—*Ibid.*

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1 Milton's History, says Warburton, in a letter to Birch, is wrote with great simplicity, contrary to his custom in his prose works; and is the better for it. But he sometimes rises to a surprising grandeur in the sentiments and expression, as at the conclusion of the Second Book: 'Henceforth we are to steer, &c.' I never saw any thing equal

DEGRADED STATE OF THE BRITISH BEFORE THE CONQUEST.

Not a few years before the Normans came, the Clergy, though in Edward the Confessor's days, had lost all good literature and religion, scarce able to read and understand their Latin service. He was a miracle to others who knew

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to this, but the conclusion of Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World.'" This praise of the acute and critical Prelate appears to us to be rather overstrained; but the reader has here the passage before him, and may decide for himself. In our opinion, the conclusion of the *First* Book (which terminates the article on "The Beginning of Nations") is much more striking and impressive.

The conclusion of Sir Walter Raleigh's History is certainly a noble piece of rhetorical composition, and derives additional interest from the circumstances under which it was written, the gallant, high-spirited author being then, to the disgrace of his sovereign, a prisoner in the Tower. Having, after many years' study, brought his laborious work to a close, he thus eloquently moralizes:

"By this which we have already set down is seen the beginning and end of the three first monarchies of the world; whereof the founders and erectors thought that they could never have ended. That of Rome, which made the fourth, was also at this time almost at the highest. We have left it flourishing in the middle of the field; having rooted up or cut down all that kept it from the eyes and admiration of the world. But after some continuance, it shall begin to lose the beauty it had; the storms of Ambition shall beat her great boughs and branches one against another; her leaves shall fall of, her limbs wither, and a rabble of barbarous nations enter the field, and cut her down.

"O, eloquent, just, and mighty Death! whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hast cast out of the world and despised: thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man, and covered all over with these two narrow words, *Hic Jacet!*"

his Grammar. The Monks went clad in fine stuffs, and made no difference what they ate; which though in itself no fault, yet to their consciences was irreligious. The great men given to gluttony and dissolute life, made a prey of the common people, abusing their daughters whom they had in service, then turning them off to the stews; the meaner sort, tippling together night and day, spent all they had in drunkenness, attended with other vices which effeminate men's minds. Whence it came to pass that, carried on with fury and rashness, more than any true fortitude or skill of war, they gave to William the Conqueror so easy a conquest. Not but that some few of all sorts were much better among them; but such was the generality. And as the long-suffering of God permits bad men to enjoy prosperous days with the good, so his severity oft-times exempts not good men from their share in evil times with the bad. If these were the causes of such misery and thraldom to those our ancestors, with what better close can be concluded than here, in fit season, to remember this age, in the midst of her security, to fear from like vices, without amendment, the revolution of like calamities.—*Ibid.*

DISCIPLINE.

Discipline is not only the removal of disorder, but, if any visible shape can be given to divine things, the very visible image and shape of Virtue; whereby she is not only seen in the regular gestures and motions of her heavenly paces as she walks, but also makes the harmony of her voice audible to mortal ears. Yea, the angels themselves, in whom no disorder is feared, as the Apostle that saw them in his rapture describes, are distinguished and quaternioned into their celestial Princedoms and Satrapies, according as God himself has writ his imperial decrees through the great provinces of Heaven. The state also of the blessed in Paradise, though never so perfect, is not therefore left without discipline, whose golden surveying-reed marks out and measures every quarter and circuit of New Jerusalem.[1] Yet it is not to be conceived, that those eternal effluences of sanctity and love in the glorified saints should by this means be

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1 2. And I, John, saw the holy city New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

15. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

Revelation of St. John, Chap. xxi.

confined and clayed with repetition of that which is prescribed, but that our happiness may orb itself into a thousand vagrancies of glory and delight, and, with a kind of eccentrical equation, be, as it were, an invariable Planet of joy and felicity: how much less can we believe that God would leave his frail and feeble, though not less beloved, Church here below, to the perpetual stumble of conjecture and disturbance in this our dark voyage, without the card and compass of discipline? Which is so hard to be of man's making, that we may see even in the guidance of a civil state to worldly happiness, it is not for every learned, or every wise man, though many of them consult in common, to invent or frame a discipline: but if it be at all the work of man, it must be of such a one as is a true knower of himself, and himself in whom contemplation and practice, wit, prudence, fortitude, and eloquence, must be rarely met, both to comprehend the hidden causes of things, and span in his thoughts all the various effects that passion or complexion can work in man's nature; and hereto must his hand be at defiance with gain, and his heart in all virtues heroic.

Certainly, if God be the Father of his family the Church, wherein could he express that name more than in training it up under his own all-wise and dear economy, not turning it loose to the havoc of strangers and wolves, that would ask no better plea than this to do in the Church of Christ whatever humour, faction, policy, or licentious will would prompt them to? Again, if Christ be the Church's husband, expecting her to be presented before him a pure unspotted virgin, in what could he shew his tender love to her more than in prescribing his own ways, which he best knew would be to the improvement of her health and beauty, with much greater care, doubtless, than the Persian king could appoint for his queen Esther, those maiden dietings and set prescriptions of baths and odours, which may render her at last the more amiable to his eye? For, of any age or sex, most unfitly may a virgin be left to an uncertain and arbitrary education: yea, though she be well instructed, yet is she still under a more strait tuition, especially if betrothed. In like manner, the Church, bearing the same resemblance, it were not reason to think she should be left des-

titute of that care, which is as necessary and proper to her as instruction.[2]—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

ALLEGORY OF THE GARDENER.

A certain man of large possessions had a fair garden, and kept therein an honest and laborious servant, whose skill and profession was to set or sow all wholesome herbs and delightful flowers, according to every season, and whatever else was to be done in a well-husbanded nursery of plants and fruits; now when the time was come that he should cut his hedges, prune his trees, look to his tender slips, and pluck up the weeds that hindered their growth, he gets him up by

[2] This article will remind the reader of Cowper's fine personification:—

> In colleges and halls in ancient days,
> When learning, virtue, piety, and truth,
> Were precious, and inculcated with care,
> There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline. His head,
> Not yet by Time completely silvered o'er,
> Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,
> But strong for service still, and unimpair'd.
> His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile
> Play'd on his lips; and in his speech was heard
> Paternal sweetness, dignity and love.
>
> *The Task*, Book II.

break of day, and makes account to do what was needful in his garden : and who would think that any other should know better than he how the day's work was to be spent? Yet for all this there comes another strange gardener, that never knew the soil, never handled a dibble or spade, to set the least pot-herb that grew there, much less had endured an hour's sweat or chillness, and yet challenges, as his right, the binding or unbinding of every flower, the clipping of every bush, the weeding and worming of every bed, both in that and all other gardens thereabout. The honest gardener, that ever since the day-peep, till now the sun was grown somewhat rank, had wrought painfully about his banks and seed-plots, at his commanding voice turns suddenly about with some wonder ; and although he could well have beteemed to have thanked him of the ease he proffered, yet, loving his own handiwork, modestly refused him, telling him withal, that, for his part, if he had thought much of the pains, he could for once have committed the work to one of his fellow-labourers, forasmuch as it is well known to be a matter of less skill and less labour to keep a garden handsome than it is to plant it, or contrive it, and

that he had already performed himself. "No," said the stranger, "this is neither for you nor your fellows to meddle with, but for me only, that am for this purpose in dignity far above you, and the provision which the lord of the soil allows me in this office is, and that with good reason, tenfold your wages." The gardener smiled and shook his head: but what was determined I cannot tell you till the end of this Parliament.—*Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence.*

ART AND NATURE IN ELOQUENCE.

For doubtless that indeed according to Art is most eloquent which returns and approaches nearest to Nature from whence it came; and they express Nature best who in their lives least wander from her safe leading, which may be called regenerate reason. So that how he should be truly eloquent who is not withal a good man, I see not.

True eloquence I find to be none but the serious and hearty love of truth. And whose mind soever is fully possessed with a fervent desire to know good things, and with the dearest

charity to infuse the knowledge of them into others, when such a man would speak, his words (by what I can express) like so many nimble and airy servitors trip about him at command, and in well-ordered files, as he would wish, fall aptly into their own places.

Apology for Smectymnuus.

DIVINE KNOWLEDGE.

How happy were it for this frail, and, as it may be truly called, mortal life of man, since all earthly things, which have the name of good and convenient in our daily use, are withal so cumbersome and full of trouble, if Knowledge, yet which is the best and lightsomest possession of the mind, were, as the common saying is, no burden; and that what it wanted of being a load to any part of the body, it did not with a heavy advantage overlay upon the spirit? For not to speak of that knowledge that rests in the contemplation of natural causes and dimensions, which must needs be a lower wisdom, as the object is low, certain it is that he who hath obtained, in more than the scantiest measure,

to know any thing distinctly of God and of his true worship, and what is infallibly good and happy in the state of man's life, what in itself evil and miserable, though vulgarly not so esteemed; he that hath obtained to know this, the only high and valuable wisdom indeed, remembering also that God, even to a strictness, quires the improvement of these his intrusted gifts, cannot but sustain a sorer burden of mind, and more pressing than any supportable toil or weight which the body can labour under; how and in what manner he shall dispose and employ those sums of knowledge and illumination which God hath sent him into this world to trade with. And that which aggravates the burden more is, that having received amongst his allotted parcels certain precious truths, of such an orient lustre as no diamond can equal; which nevertheless he has in charge to put off at any cheap rate, yea, for nothing to them that will; the great Merchants of this world, fearing that this course would soon discover and disgrace the false glitter of their deceitful wares, wherewith they abuse the people like poor Indians, with beads and glasses, practise by all means how they may suppress the vending of such rarities, and at such

a cheapness as would undo them, and turn their trash upon their hands.

And although divine inspiration must certainly have been sweet to those ancient Prophets, yet the irksomeness of that truth which they brought was so unpleasant to them, that every where they call it a burden. Yea, that mysterious Book of Revelation, which the great Evangelist was bid to eat,[1] as it had been some eye-brightening electuary of knowledge and foresight, though it were sweet in his mouth and in the learning, it was bitter in his belly, bitter in the denouncing. Nor was this hid from the wise poet Sophocles, who in that place of his tragedy where *Tiresias* is called to resolve king Edipus in a matter which he knew would be grievous, brings him in bemoaning his lot, that he knew more than other men. For surely to every good and peaceable man it must in nature needs be a hateful thing to be the displeaser and molester of thousands; much better would it like him doubtless to be the messenger of gladness and contentment, which is his chief intended business to all mankind,

[1] Chap. x. v. 9.

but that they resist and oppose their own true happiness. But when God commands to take the trumpet, and blow a dolorous or a jarring blast, it lies not in man's will what he shall say, or what he shall conceal. If he shall think to be silent, as *Jeremiah* did, because of the reproach and derision he met with daily, and *all his familiar friends watched for his halting*, to be revenged on him for speaking the truth, he would be forced to confess, as he confessed: *his Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones; I was weary with forbearing and could not stay.*[2] —Which might teach these times not suddenly to condemn all things that are sharply spoken or vehemently written.—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

TOLERATION.

It is human frailty to err, and no man is infallible here on earth. But so long as the Lutherans, Calvinists, Anabaptists, Socinians, and Arminians profess to set the Word of God only

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[2] Chap. xx. v. 9.

before them, as the rule of their faith and obedience, and use all diligence and sincerity of heart, by reading, by learning, by study, by prayer for illumination of the Holy Spirit, to understand this rule and obey it, they have done whatever man can do. God will assuredly pardon them, as he did the friends of *Job*, good and pious men, though much mistaken, as there it appears, in some points of doctrine. But some will say, with Christians it is otherwise, whom God has promised by his Spirit to teach all things. True, all things absolutely necessary to salvation; but the hottest disputes among Protestants, calmly and charitably examined, will be found less than such. The Lutheran holds Consubstantiation; an error indeed, but not mortal. The Calvinist is taxed with Predestination, and to make God the author of sin, not with any dishonourable thoughts of God, but it may be over-zealously asserting his absolute power, not without plea from Scripture. The Anabaptist is accused of denying infants their right to baptism; they say again that they deny nothing but what the Scripture denies them. The Arian and Socinian are charged to dispute against the Trinity; yet they assume to believe the Father,

Son, and Holy Ghost, according to Scripture and the Apostolic Creed. As for the terms of Trinity, Tri-Unity, Co-essentiality, Tri-personality, and the like, they reject them as scholastic notions, not to be found in Scripture, which, by a general Protestant maxim, is plain and perspicuous abundantly to explain its own meaning in the properest words belonging to so high a matter, and so necessary to be known: a mystery indeed in their sophistic subtleties, but in Scripture a plain doctrine. The Arminian, lastly, is condemned for setting up Free Will against Free Grace; but that imputation he disclaims in all his writings, and grounds himself largely upon Scripture only. It cannot be denied that the authors, or late revivers, of all these sects or opinions, were learned, worthy, zealous, and religious men, as appears by their lives written, and the fame of their many eminent and learned followers; perfect and powerful in the Scriptures, holy and unblameable in their actions. And it cannot be imagined that God would desert such painful and zealous labourers in his church, and oft-times great sufferers for their conscience, to damnable errors and a reprobate sense, who had so often implored the

assistance of his Spirit; but rather having made no man infallible, that he has pardoned their errors, and accepts their pious endeavours, sincerely searching all things according to the rule of Scripture, with such guidance and direction as they can obtain of God by prayer. What Protestant, then, who himself maintains the same principles, and disavows all implicit faith, would persecute, and not rather charitably tolerate such men as these, unless he means to abjure the principles of his own religion? If it be asked how far they should be tolerated, I answer, doubtless equally, as being all Protestants; that is on all occasions to be permitted to give an account of their faith, either by arguing, preaching in their several assemblies, by public writing, and the freedom of printing.

Treatise of True Religion, Heresy, &c.

Ill was our condition changed from legal to evangelical, and small advantage gotten by the Gospel, if for the spirit of adoption to freedom promised us, we receive again the spirit of bondage to fear; if our fear, which was then servile to God only, must now be servile in religion towards men. Strange, also, and preposterous

fear, if when and wherein it hath attained, by the redemption of our Saviour, to be filial only towards God, it must now be servile towards the magistrate; who, by subjecting us to his judgment in these things, brings back into religion that law of terror and satisfaction belonging now only to civil crimes; and thereby in effect abolishes the Gospel, by establishing again the law to a far worse yoke of servitude upon us than before. It will therefore not misbecome the meanest Christian to put in mind Christian magistrates—and so much the more freely by how much the more they desire to be thought Christian (for they will be thereby, as they ought to be in these things, the more our brethren and the less our lords), that they meddle not rashly with Christian liberty, the birthright and outward testimony of our adoption: lest, while they little think it, nay, think they do God service, they themselves, like the sons of the bondwoman, be found persecuting them who are free born of the Spirit; and by a sacrilege of not the least aggravation, bereaving them of that sacred liberty which our Saviour, with his own blood, purchased for them.—*A Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes.*

SECTS AND SCHISMS.

It may suffice us to be taught by St. Paul that there must be sects for the manifesting of those that are sound-hearted. These are but winds and flaws to try the floating vessel of our faith, whether it be staunch and sail well. By this is seen who lives by faith and certain knowledge, and who by credulity and the prevailing opinion of the age, whose virtue is of an unchangeable grain and whose of a slight wash. If God come to try our constancy, we ought not to shrink or stand the less firmly for that, but pass on with more steadfast resolution to establish the truth, though it were through a lane of sects and heresies on each side. Other things men do to the glory of God; but sects and errors, it seems, God suffers to be for the glory of good men, that the world may know and reverence their true fortitude and undaunted constancy in the truth. Let us not, therefore, make these things an incumbrance, or an excuse of our delay in reforming, which God sends us as an incitement to proceed with more honour and alacrity. For if there were no opposition, where were the trial of an unfeigned goodness and magnanimity?

Virtue that wavers is not virtue, but vice revolted from itself, and after a while returning. The actions of just and pious men do not darken in their middle course, but *Solomon* tells us they are as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

In things artificial, seldom any elegance is wrought without a superfluous waste and refuse in the transaction. No marble statue can be politely carved, no fair edifice built, without almost as much rubbish and sweeping; insomuch that even in the spiritual conflict of *St. Paul's* conversion, there fell scales from his eyes that were not perceived before.[1] No wonder, then, in the reforming of a Church, which is never brought to effect without the fierce encounter of truth and falsehood together, if, as it were, the splinters and shares of so violent a jousting there fall from between the shock many fond errors and fanatic opinions, which, when Truth has the upper hand, and the Reformation shall be perfected, will easily be rid out of the way, or kept so low as they shall be only the exercise of our knowledge, not the disturbance or interrup-

[1] Acts, chap. ix. v. 18.

tion of our faith.—*Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty.*

THE DOOR OF GRACE.

In the State, many things at first are crude and hard to digest, which only time and deliberation can supple and concoct. But in Religion, wherein is no immaturity, nothing out of season, it goes far otherwise. The door of Grace turns upon smooth hinges, wide opening to send out,[1] but soon shutting, to recal the precious offers of Mercy to a nation: which, unless watchfulness and zeal, two quick-sighted and ready-handed virgins, be there in our behalf to receive, we lose, and still the after we lose, the straiter the door opens, and the less is offered.

But it will be said that the reformation is a long work, and the miseries of Ireland are urgent of a speedy redress. They be indeed, and how speedy we are, the poor afflicted rem-

1 Thus the gate of Heaven—

——— self opened wide
On golden hinges turning.

Par. Lost, Book V. l. 254.

nant of our martyred countrymen, that sit there on the sea-shore, counting the hours of our delay with their sighs, and the minutes with their falling tears, perhaps with the distilling of their bloody wounds, if they have not quite, by this time, cast off, and almost cursed the vain hope of our foundered ships and aids, can best judge how speedy we are to their relief.[2]—*Ibid.*

MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL.

Who is there almost that measures wisdom by simplicity, strength by suffering, dignity by lowliness? Who is there that counts it first to

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[2] The Irish Rebellion or Insurrection, in which from forty to fifty thousand English settlers were massacred by the Irish Catholics, took place in the same year (1641) in which the above was written. The King, who was then in Scotland, lost no time in requesting the aid of Parliament to quell the insurgents, and relieve our suffering countrymen; but the Commons were too busy in seeking to extend their own authority to heed this distant application. They indeed wisely levied money from the nation for the supply of troops, and took arms from the royal magazines; but the money they employed to their own purposes at home, and the arms they kept to employ against the King himself. Milton's just and pathetic rebuke of the Long Parliament is worthy of his noble nature; but (such is the blindness of party) when speaking of the same men in the following year, he talks of "so much united excellence met in one globe of brightness and efficacy;" and declares that if he "should compare their actions with those exploits of highest fame in poems and panegyrics of old, it would but diminish and impair their worth!"—See *Apology for Smectymnuus.*

be last, something to be nothing, and reckons himself of great command in that he is a servant? Yet God, when he meant to subdue the world and hell at once, part of that to salvation, and this wholly to perdition, made choice of no other weapons or auxiliaries than these, whether to save or to destroy. It had been easy for Him to have drawn out his legions into array, and flanked them with his thunder: therefore he sent Foolishness to confute Wisdom, Weakness to bind Strength, Despisedness to vanquish Pride. And this is the great mystery of the Gospel, made good in Christ himself, who, as he testifies, came not to be ministered to, but to minister, and must be fulfilled in all his ministers, till his second coming.—*Ibid.*

SHAME AND SELF-ESTEEM.

It was thought of old in Philosophy that shame, or, to call it better, the reverence of our elders, our brethren and friends, was the greatest incitement to virtuous deeds, and the greatest dissuasion from unworthy attempts that might be. Hence we may read in the Iliad, where

Hector being wished to retire from the battle, many of his forces being routed, makes answer that he durst not for shame, lest the Trojan knights and dames should think he did ignobly. And certain it is, that whereas terror is thought such a great stickler in a Commonwealth, honourable shame is a far greater, and has more reason; for where shame is there is fear; but where fear is there is not presently shame. And if any thing may be done to inbreed in us this generous and Christianly reverence one of another, the very nurse and guardian of piety and virtue, it cannot sooner be than by such a discipline in the Church as may use us to have in awe the assemblies of the faithful, and to count it a thing most grievous, next to the grieving of God's spirit, to offend those whom he hath put in authority, as a healing superintendence over our lives and behaviours, both to our own happiness, and that we may not give offence to good men.

But there is yet a more ingenuous and noble degree of honest shame, or to call it, if you will, an esteem whereby men bear an inward reverence toward their own persons. And if the love of God, as a fire sent from Heaven to be ever kept

alive upon the altar of our hearts, be the first principle of all godly and virtuous actions in men, this pious and just honouring of ourselves is the second, and may be thought as the radical moisture and fountain-head, whence every laudable and worthy enterprize issues forth. And although I have given it the name of a liquid thing, yet it is not incontinent to bound itself, as humid things are, but hath in it a most restraining and powerful abstinence to start back and globe itself upward from the mixture of any ungenerous and unbeseeming motion, or any soil wherewith it may peril to stain itself. Something, I confess, it is to be ashamed of evil doing in the presence of any; and to reverence the opinion and the countenance of a good man rather than a bad, fearing most in his sight to offend, goes so far as almost to be virtuous; yet this is but still the fear of infamy, and many such, when they find themselves alone, saving their reputation, will compound with other scruples, and come to a close treaty with their dearer vices in secret. But he that holds himself in reverence and due esteem, both for the dignity of God's image upon him, and for the price of his redemption, which he thinks is visibly marked

upon his forehead, accounts himself both a fit person to do the noblest and godliest deeds, and much better worth than to deject and defile, with such a debasement and such a pollution as sin is, himself so highly ransomed and ennobled, to a new friendship and filial relation with God. Nor can he fear so much the offence and reproach of others as he dreads and would blush at the reflection of his own severe and modest eye upon himself, if it should see him doing or imagining that which is sinful, though in the deepest secrecy.—*Ibid.*

STATE AND PERSON OF A KING.

I cannot better liken the state and person of a king than to that mighty Nazarite *Samson*, who being disciplined from his birth in the precepts and practice of temperance and sobriety, without the strong drink of injurious and excessive desires,[1] grows up to a noble strength and perfection with those his illustrious and sunny locks,

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1 O. madness, to think use of strongest wines
And strongest drinks our chief support of health,
When God, with these forbidden, made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare;
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.
Samson Agonistes, l. 553.

the Laws, waving and curling about his god-like shoulders.[2] And while he keeps them about him undiminished and unshorn, he may, with the jawbone of an ass, that is with the word of his meanest officer, suppress and put to confusion thousands of those that rise against his just power. But laying down his head among the strumpet flatteries of prelates, while he sleeps and thinks no harm, they wickedly shaving off all those bright and weighty tresses of his Laws and just prerogatives,[3] which were his ornament and strength, deliver him over to indirect and violent counsels, which as those Philistines put

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2 Ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achieved,
And on his shoulders waving down, those locks
That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd.
Ibid. l. 1491.

His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar'd
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
Par. Lost, Book IV. l. 300.

3 Into the snare I fell,
Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life,
At length to lay my head, and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength, in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece;
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shaven and disarm'd, among mine enemies.
Samson Agonistes, l. 532.

out the fair and far-sighted eyes of his natural discerning, and make him grind in the prison-house of their sinister ends and practices upon him; till he, knowing this prelatical razor to have bereft him of his wonted might, nourish again his puissant hair, the golden beams of law and right, and they sternly shook thunder with ruin upon the heads of those his evil counsellors,[4] but not without great affliction to himself.—*Ibid.*

VAIN TRADITIONS OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE.

We need no longer muse at the spreading of many idle traditions so soon after the Apostles, and the inconsiderate zeal of the next age, that heeded more the person than the doctrine. Wherever a man who had been any way conversant with the Apostles was to be found, thither flew all the inquisitive ears, although the

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4 The sentiment and expression here recal the denunciation in *Lycidas*, where "the pilot of the Galilean lake"

Shook his mitred locks and stern bespake.

Samson Agonistes was not published till 1670, twenty-nine years after the *Reason of Church Government*; but the above highly poetical extract will shew how vividly the story of the "heroic Nazarite" had been imprinted on the poet's imagination.

exercise of right instructing was changed into the curiosity of impertinent fabling: where the mind was to be edified with solid doctrine, there the fancy was soothed with solemn stories. With less fervency was studied what St. Paul or St. John had written than was listened to one that could say, here he taught, here he stood, this was his stature, and thus he went habited; and O happy this house that harboured him, and that cold stone whereon he rested,—this village wherein he wrought such a miracle, and that pavement bedewed with the warm effusion of his last blood, that sprouted up into eternal roses to crown his martyrdom! Thus, while all their thoughts were poured out upon circumstances, and the gazing after such men as had sat at table with the Apostles, by this means they lost their time and truanted in the fundamental grounds of saving knowledge.

Of Prelatical Episcopacy.

CONCLUDING THANKSGIVING.

Let us all go, every true Protested Briton throughout the three kingdoms, and render thanks to God, the Father of Light and fountain of heavenly grace, and to his Son, Christ our Lord; and let us recount even here, without delay, the patience and long-suffering that God hath used towards our blindness and hardness, time after time. For he being equally near to his whole creation of mankind, and of free power to turn his benefick and fatherly regard to what region or kingdom he pleases, hath yet ever had this Island under the special indulgent eye of his Providence; and pitying us the first of all other nations, after he had decreed to purify and renew his Church, that lay wallowing in idolatrous pollutions, sent first to us a healing Messenger, to touch softly our sores, and carry a gentle hand over our wounds. He knocked once and twice, and came again, opening our drowsy eye-lids leisurely by that glimmering light which Wickliffe and his followers dispersed; and still taking off by degrees the inveterate scales from our nigh-perished sight, purged also our

deaf ears, and prepared them to attend his second warning trumpet in our Grandsires' days. How else could they have been able to have received the sudden assault of his reforming spirit, warring against human principles and carnal sense, the pride of flesh that still cried up Antiquity, Custom, Canons, Councils, and Laws, and cried down the truth for Novelty, Schism, Profaneness, and Sacrilege, when as we that have lived so long in abundant light, besides the sunny reflection of all the neighbouring Churches, have yet our hearts rivetted with those old opinions, and so obstructed and benumbed with the same fleshly reasonings, which in our Forefathers soon melted and gave way, against the morning beam of Reformation.

O if we freeze at noon, after their early thaw, let us fear lest the Sun for ever hide himself, and turn his orient steps from our ungrateful Horizon, justly condemned to be eternally benighted. Which dreadful judgment, O Thou the ever-begotten light and perfect image of the Father, intercede may never come upon us, as we trust thou hast: for thou hast opened our difficult and sad times, and given us an unexpected breathing after our long oppressions;

thou hast done justice upon those that tyrannized over us, whilst some men wavered and admired a vain shadow of wisdom in a tongue nothing slow to utter guile, though thou hast taught us to admire only that which is good, and to count that only praiseworthy which is grounded upon thy divine precepts. Thou hast discovered the plots, and frustrated the hopes of all the wicked in the land, and put to shame the persecutors of thy Church; thou hast made our false prophets to be found a lie in the sight of all the people, and chased them with sudden confusion and amazement before the redoubled brightness of thy descending cloud, that now covers thy tabernacle.

Who is there that cannot trace thee now in thy beamy walks through the midst of thy sanctuary, amidst those golden candlesticks, which have long suffered a dimness amongst us through the violence of those that had seized them, and were more taken with the mention of their gold than of their starry light. Come therefore, O Thou that hast the seven stars in thy right hand,[1]

1 He that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.

Rev. of St. John, chap. ii. v. 1.

appoint thy chosen Priests, according to their orders and courses of old, to minister before thee, and duly to dress and pour out the consecrated oil into thy holy and ever-burning lamps. Thou hast sent out the spirit of prayer upon thy servants, over all the land, to this effect, and stirred up their vows, as the sound of many waters, about thy throne.[2] Every one can say that now certainly thou hast visited this land, and hast not forgotten the utmost corners of the earth, in a time when men had thought that thou wast gone up from us to the farthest end of the Heavens, and hadst left to do marvellously among the sons of these last ages. O perfect and accomplish thy glorious acts: for men may leave their works unfinished, but thou art a God, thy nature is perfection; shouldst thou bring us thus far onward from Egypt to destroy us in this wilderness, though we deserve, yet thy great name would suffer in the rejoicing of thine enemies, and the deluded hope of all thy servants. When thou hast settled peace in the Church, and righteous judgment in the kingdom, then shall all thy saints address their

[2] His voice was as the sound of many waters.—*Rev.* chap. i. v. 15.

voices of joy and triumph to thee, standing on the shore of that red sea into which our enemies had almost driven us. And he that now for haste snatches up a plain ungarnished present as a thank-offering to thee, which could not be deferred in regard of thy so many late deliverances, wrought for us one upon another, may then perhaps take up a harp and sing thee an elaborate song to generations. In that day it shall no more be said in scorn, this or that was never held so till this present age, when men have better learned that the times and seasons pass along under thy feet, to go and come at thy bidding: and as thou didst dignify our fathers' days with many revelations above all the foregoing ages, since thou tookest this flesh, so thou canst vouchsafe to us (though unworthy) as large a portion of thy spirit as thou pleasest: for who shall prejudice thy all-governing will?—seeing the power of thy grace is not past away with the primitive times, as fond and faithless men imagine, but thy kingdom is now at hand, and thou standing at thy door. Come forth out of thy royal chambers, O Prince of all the kings of the earth, put on the visible robes of thy imperial majesty, take up that unlimited

sceptre which thy Almighty Father hath bequeathed thee,—for now the voice of thy Bride calls thee, and all creatures sigh to be renewed! —*Animadversions upon the Remonstrant's Defence.*

THE END.

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